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Life, love, legacy

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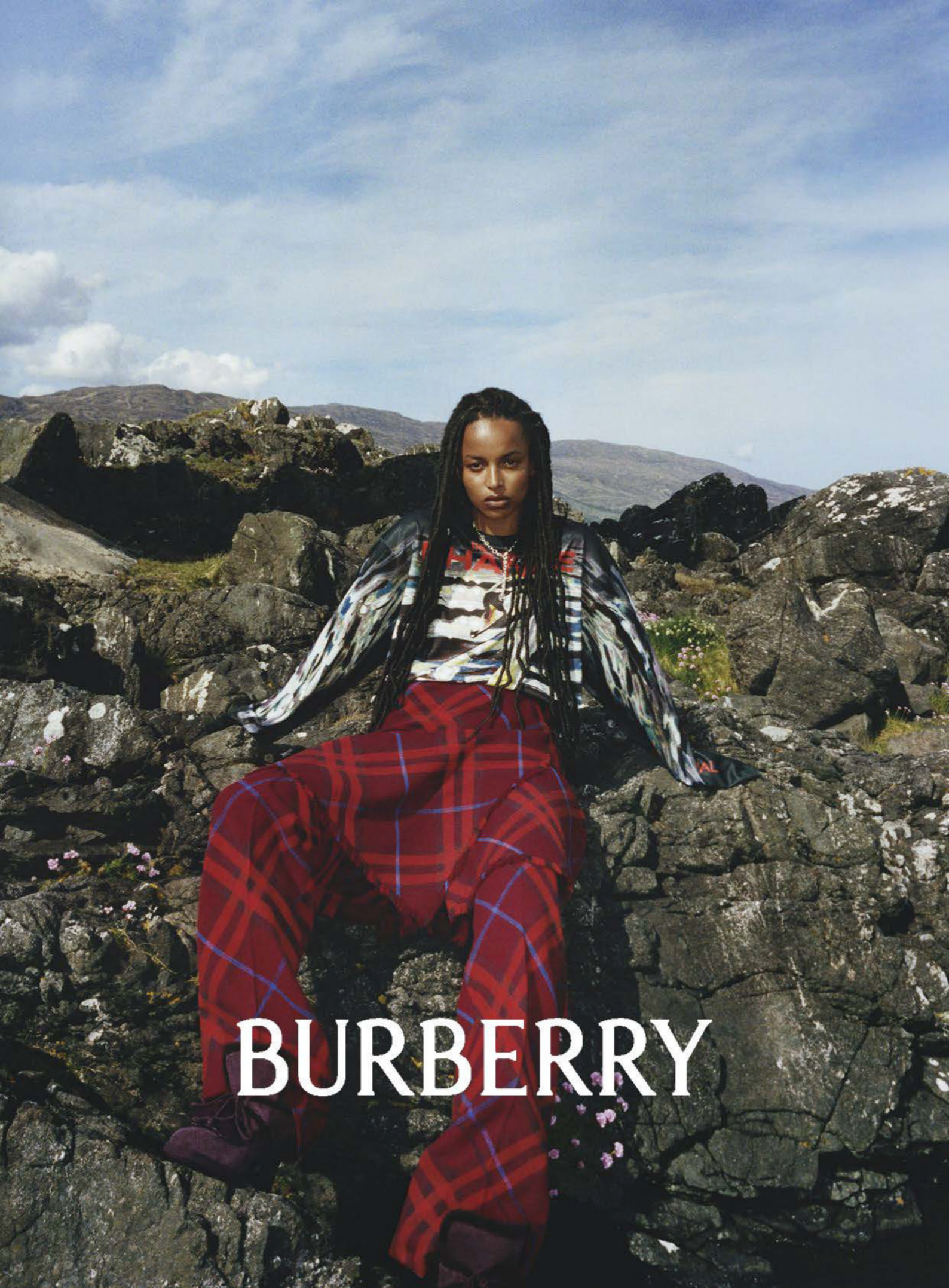
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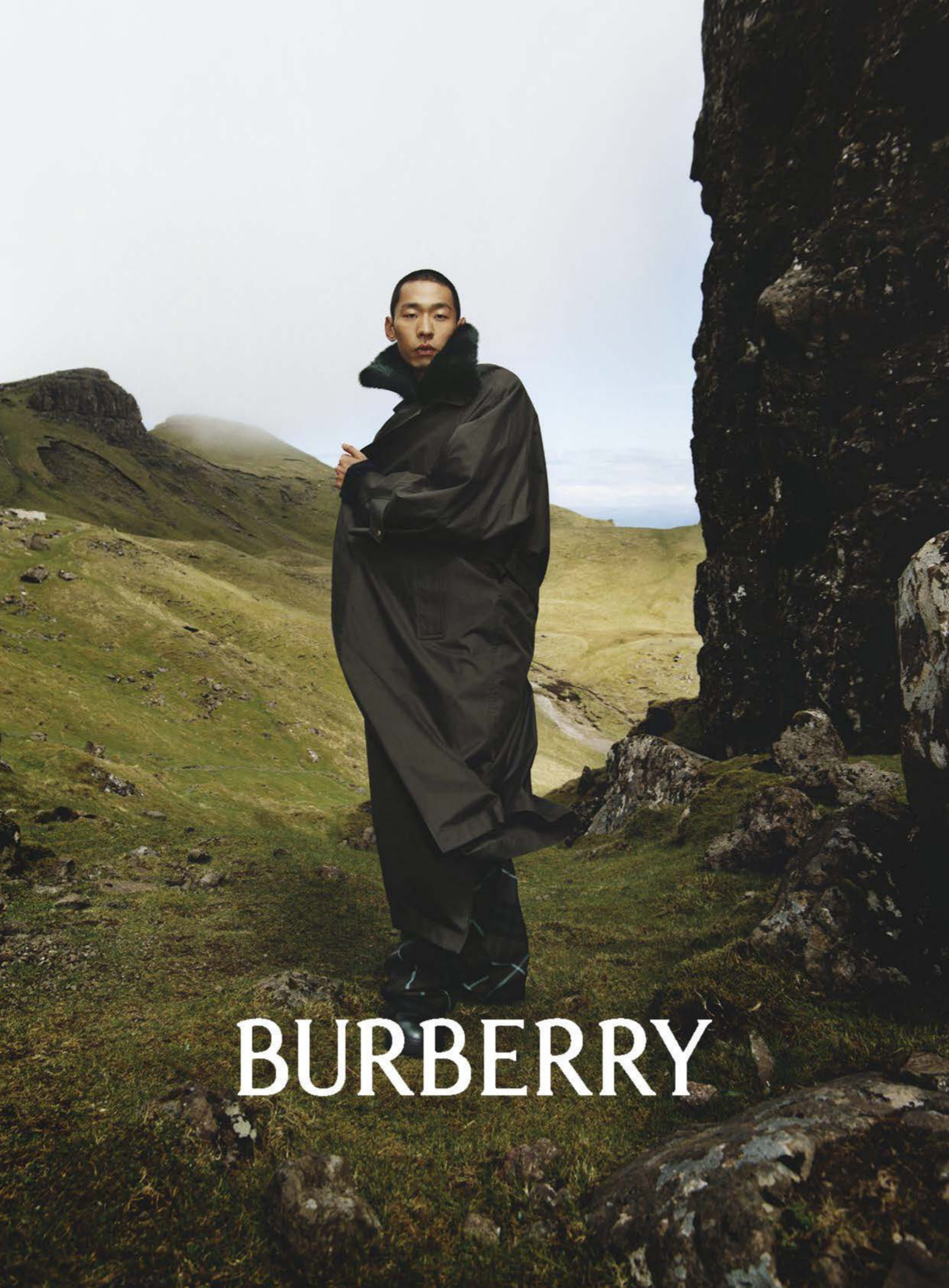
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October 2023
VOGUE AUSTRALIA

On the cover

Kylie Minogue wears a LOUIS VUITTON dress and rings.

Stylist: Christine Centenera
Photographer: Alique
Hair: Teddy Charles
Make-up: Pati Dubroff
Manicure: Shigeko Taylor
Props: Brandon Clayton
Production: Willson Project
Shot on location at Flamingo Estate, Los Angeles

40 Editor's letter
44 Contributors
46 On set

52 Spring awakening
Invigorate a wardrobe with versatile pieces that endure beyond the moment.

61 Peak demand
Saint Laurent's Anthony Vaccarello got to the point with one of the shoes of the season.

62 Track changes
Jeweller Van Cleef & Arpels listened when a duchess made a request that's now etched in bejewelled history.

64 Water, baby
The Australian swim names to know now are out front in design, innovation, ethics and, crucially, the way they each capture summer.

66 Silver service
Danish jeweller Georg Jensen asked the designer of knitwear brand A. Roege Hoeve to give her singular treatment to a new collection.

71 Curated by: Jorja Smith
The British singer-songwriter is attuned to the nexus of sound and culture. Here, she shares what's inspiring her across spheres.

72 Wild at heart
The irrepressible Jenny Kee has created her final showstopper dress. She reflects how a creation can capture a life's memories.

75 Top of his field
Ahead of the Melbourne Cup Carnival, friend of the Victoria Racing Club milliner Stephen Jones shares his hat wisdom from an illustrious, feather-filled career.

76 Sound of the city
Meet five on-the-rise music makers set to enthral a home crowd at Sydney's inaugural South by Southwest (SXSW) Festival.

85 In her shoes
The always-original Chloë Sevigny tries out the surprising new collaboration between Miu Miu and Church's.

88 Swan song
Amber Scott, The Australian Ballet's principal artist, had one dream before she hung up her pointe shoes for good: to dance in *Swan Lake* one last time.

92 Big fish
His bright ideas about seafood have changed the way we eat, but when it comes to innovation, trailblazing chef Josh Niland is only just getting started.

95 Story time
This month, lose yourself in a great read, from a starry romance to a mystery on the streets of Brisbane.

97 Come into her world
With a new album, the anthem of the year and a major Las Vegas residency, Australia's pop empress is as unstoppable as ever – and Kylie Minogue couldn't be happier.

112 Look closer
In understated hues, minimalism this season is crafted sumptuously with clever details that speak volumes.

124 Self-portrait
Ahead of the expansive survey of his work, esteemed portrait artist Vincent Namatjira reflects on a decade of satire and subversion.

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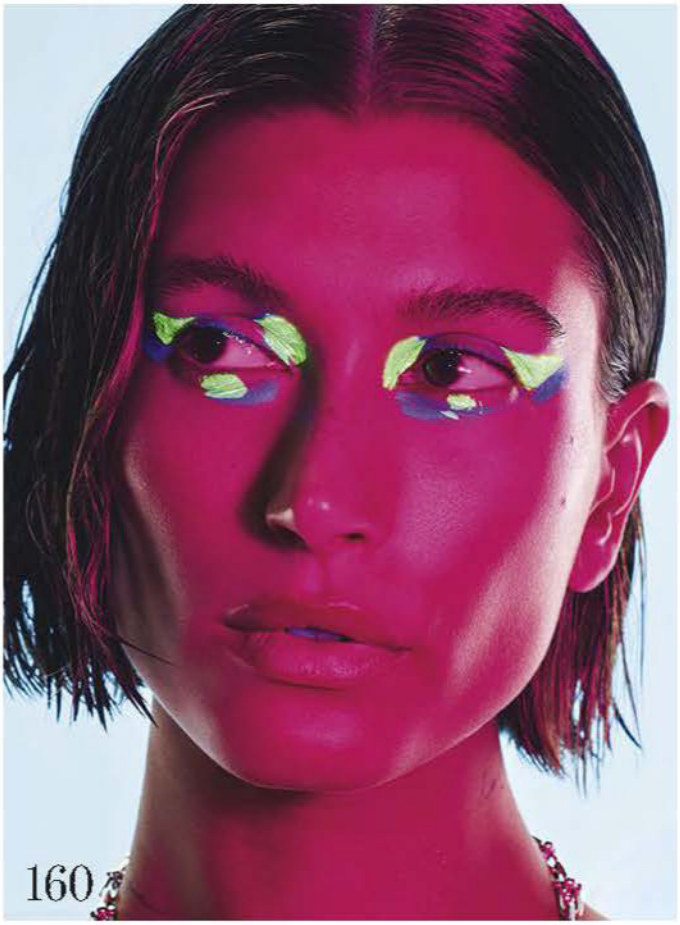

130 Eternal sunshine
What might be the most successful brand in Australian fashion history, Zimmermann has become an unstoppable global label. They ignore the noise and look ahead – to Paris and an even brighter future.

136 New cast
In 2023, *Vogue* embarked on a mission to find modelling's biggest new names and combed the world in a push for authentic inclusivity. Meet the faces of the future.

146 Rage against the machine
As AI gathers pace, so too does the indignation about how it may affect our lives. *Vogue*'s AI expert unravels it from a perspective of potential rather than panic, and argues that optimism is needed.

150 Plain beautiful
The dictum that simplicity is the new luxury rings especially true this season. Find a match in clothing that hinges on the precision of lines, fabric and construction.

160 Day glow
The best party looks live atop radiant, illuminated skin. Before you reach for ultraviolet pigments, tick a perfect base off your list.

164 Written in ink
In the wake of an abusive relationship, writer Madison Griffiths got her second tattoo, which set her on the path to eventually becoming an artist herself.

166 A rose is a rose
Step into the sweeping fields of the south of France, where Lancôme is making a home for sustainability and innovation.

169 Paint the town
Kick your look up a notch while boosting your mood with a slick of high-shine polish in bold and bright colours.

171 Opening ceremony
Ethical haircare brand Ceremonia is grounded in Latinx heritage and takes inspiration from the lushness of clean South American ingredients.

174 Talk is cheap
From boundaries to gaslighting, therapy buzzwords have become part of our common parlance. But are we guilty of talking the therapy talk without walking the walk?

178 Soirée
183 Horoscopes
184 Final note

RICHARD BURBRIDGE, DARIO CATELLANI

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Editor's letter

DARREN McDONALD

Like many Australians, I grew up watching and listening to Kylie Minogue. She is an inspiration, and has managed to stay the course for an amazing and memorable music career spanning more than 30 years. Kylie, who recently released *Tension*, her 16th album, just keeps on giving, which is why we wanted to celebrate her stardom on our October cover, her seventh for *Vogue* Australia.

What I respect about so many famous Australian women with a global influence is that they're proud of their home and loyal. No matter how big they get – for Margot, Nicole, Cate, Kylie and so on – Australia remains important to them and they always find a way to champion it.

In real life, Kylie is quirky, cool, charming, sassy and very funny. On set, she is a true professional. Photographing people of this calibre involves much preparation and collaboration. It's a big ask for anyone, because they're putting themselves in your hands to be transformed. With Kylie, that trust was immediate.

While she's no doubt away from Australia a lot during the year, when back in Melbourne with her family Kylie is grounded and down-to-earth. But as our story attests, she really knows how to turn on the pure pop star persona when it's called for. (See page 97.)

Also in this issue we profile one of Australia's greatest portrait artists, Vincent Namatjira, whose survey exhibition opens at The Art Gallery of South Australia's Tarnanthi Festival this month. (See page 124.) In 2020, Namatjira was the first Indigenous artist to win the Archibald Prize with *Stand strong for who you are*, a painting of himself with Adam Goodes. Personally, I am drawn to the power, commentary and irreverence of Namatjira's work; case in point, a series showing the artist pictured alongside British royals.

Sisters Nicky and Simone Zimmermann are behind possibly the most well-known Australian fashion brand of all time, and their success with Zimmermann couldn't have happened to a more authentic duo. Their teamwork has helped them sell the Australian dream to the world. The pair are true to what they do and unwavering in their vision. Nicky always applies this approach to design, asking: "Does it make me feel good when I get dressed?", and "Is it enhancing someone's mood?" I respect the direct simplicity of this take as I think anything that makes you feel good is good enough. (See page 130.)

Following last month's September cover featuring Tarlisa Gaykamangu, we had so much positive feedback about her strength, story and journey. All power to the current conversation and the ongoing cultural impact of what we all strive to achieve – equality and equity.

CHRISTINE CENTENERA Editor-in-Chief

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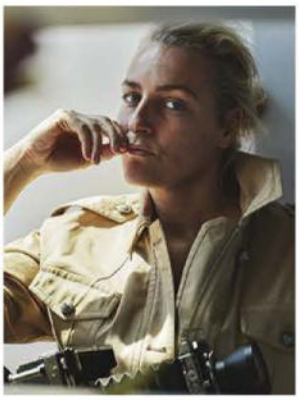
Contributors

From a creative who shared his stunning Los Angeles home, to celebrated international make-up artists and *Vogue*'s own digital brand expert, meet the people who helped make the magic this issue.

ALIQUE

According to Alique – the celebrated Dutch fashion photographer tasked with capturing Kylie Minogue for the cover – the heatwave sweeping LA on the day of the shoot proved to create a "more intimate and gentle mood" on set. "This was all about Kylie," she says of the inspiration behind the images taken on the grounds of the "magical" Flamingo Estate. "The image with her leg up and laughing is [my] favourite; it's a moment I remember having lots of throughout the afternoon," Alique recalls. "You can feel her inner intention most. She wants to smile and share her beauty and joy [with] the world."



RICHARD CHRISTIANSEN

Australian-born, LA-based Flamingo Estate founder Richard Christiansen was thrilled to welcome former colleague and collaborator Kylie Minogue to his sprawling villa for the shoot of her seventh *Vogue* Australia cover. Following a fun day on set, during which he jokes his pet goats sang "Padam Padam" – a hit taken from Minogue's upcoming album *Tension* – Christiansen enjoyed the rare opportunity to share a glass of his own rosé with the artist around his kitchen table. "It was like having a friend over," he says. "We loved it."

NIKKI CHOWDHURY

Where is AI heading in the future? Off the back of this year's *Vogue* Codes, where AI and its implications dominated discussion, *Vogue* Australia's digital audience manager Nikki Chowdhury tackles this question with optimism in 'Rage against the machine', from page 146. "My hope for the future of AI is simple," she says. "It's that we remain open to the possibilities it brings us and integrate it into our lives in a meaningful, responsible and ethical way." Looking ahead, she adds: "2024 is geared to be a tipping point for AI, ushering in various applications in many fields – from sustainability to health and fashion."

ISABELLA SCHIMID

For our feature celebrating the success of sisters Simone and Nicky Zimmermann's eponymous Australian label (see page 130), Sydney-based make-up artist Isabella Schimid set out to create a fresh and natural beauty look. "Everyone was in great spirits, it was a fun day," the creative says of the occasion. The shoot, which took place at the brand's headquarters, brought back fond memories for Schimid, who recalls that her daughter wore Zimmermann for both her year 12 formal and 21st birthday. "It was beautiful to be in their amazing offices," she says. "Nikki and Simone were so lovely and easy to work with."

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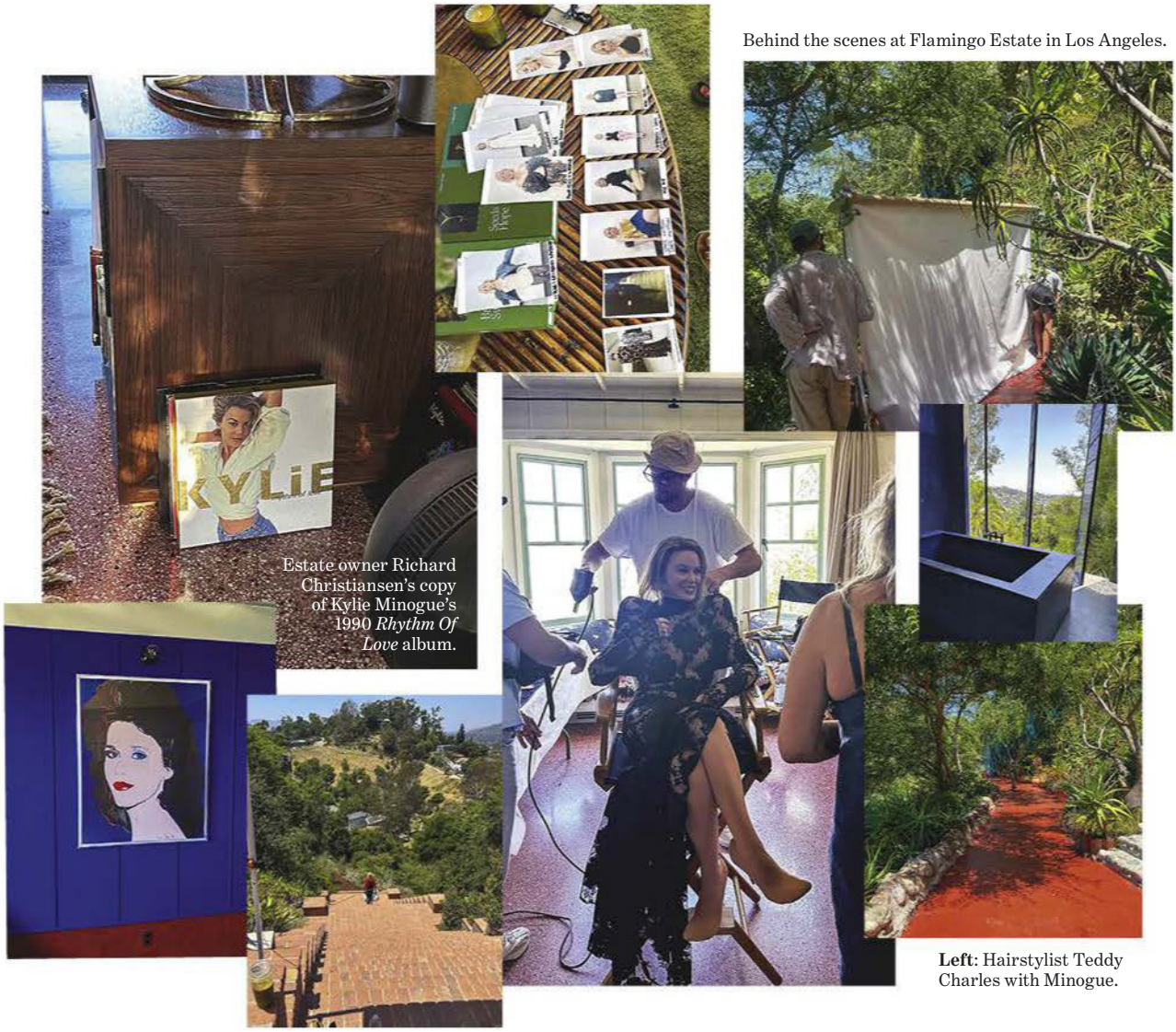

Behind the scenes at Flamingo Estate in Los Angeles.

Estate owner Richard Christiansen's copy of Kylie Minogue's 1990 *Rhythm Of Love* album.

Left: Hairstylist Teddy Charles with Minogue.

In harmony

With the release of her 16th studio album, *Tension*, Kylie Minogue appears on our cover for the seventh time, shot in Los Angeles and projecting a golden-age Hollywood glamour.

After fronting *Vogue* Australia for the first time in 1994, our very own Kylie Minogue returns to the cover to celebrate the release of her latest album. Lensed by fashion photographer Alique one wildly warm LA day in July, the Princess of Pop was captured for her 15-page spread on the grounds of Richard Christiansen's picturesque Flamingo Estate, high in the hills above the city.

Australian-born Christiansen, who first met Minogue while working as an art director on her Kiss Me Once tour some eight years ago, says hosting the artist felt like hosting a friend. "We'd been talking about cooking a meal at the estate for a few months but never got our dates to work, so it was perfect," he explains. "It was one of the hottest days of the year, so I was cutting cold watermelon for my goats and ordering cold drinks for the crew."

Christiansen's glorious 1940s-built villa and sprawling garden also lends its name to the owner's Flamingo Estate line of body care and home fragrance, which sources ingredients from the estate and local farms.

The sanctuary proved an ideal location for the shoot. Styled by editor-in-chief Christine Centenera, Minogue brought her particular star power to the day, dressed in the best new season looks from the likes of Miu Miu, Schiaparelli, Marc Jacobs and Chanel.

"Kylie is an icon who we all love, appreciate and idolise – so the shoot didn't need to push any sort of agenda or perspective," explains junior fashion and market editor Harriet Crawford of the creative brief for the cover. "Sometimes striping back all the noise and just shooting simple and beautiful imagery of an icon can be stronger than trying to make a statement."

WORDS: ANGELICA XIDIAS
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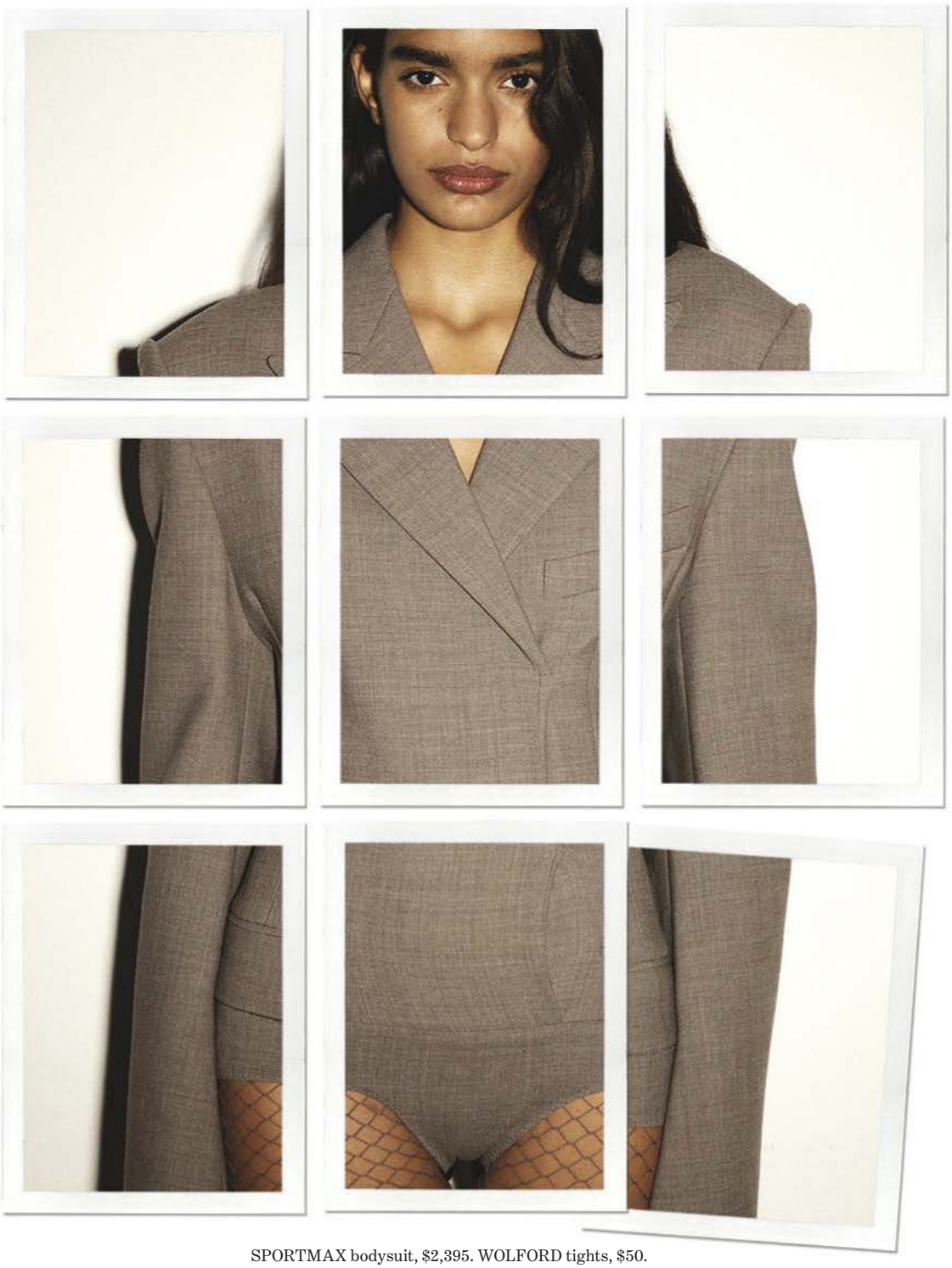
VOGUE AMERICAN EXPRESS FASHION'S NIGHT OUT

Spring awakening

The time between seasons presents an opportunity: invigorate a wardrobe with versatile pieces that turn over a new leaf and endure beyond the mood of a moment.

STYLING HARRIET CRAWFORD PHOTOGRAPHS JAMIE HEATH



SPORTMAX bodysuit, $2,395. WOLFORD tights, $50.

WORDS: JONAH WATERHOUSE HAIR: RORY RICE MAKE-UP: NISHA VAN BERKE
MODEL: BIANCA MARTINELLO ALL PRICES APPROXIMATE DETAILS AT VOGUE.COM.AU/WTB

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MICHAEL KORS COLLECTION jacket and pants, both P.O.A. CARTIER bracelets, on right hand, $5,850, and $13,000, and on left hand, watch, $42,300, and bracelet, $5,850. SAINT LAURENT shoes, $1,710.

LOUIS VUITTON jacket, $7,600, and pants, $7,200. TIFFANY & CO. earrings, $6,900.

Taupe tier

Unexpected but perennial, tailoring in a tan tint provides a fresh approach to suiting when the weather calls for hues less heavy.

Light coverage

The dutiful trench coat is presented in lightweight variations for spring. Layer over a casually coded wardrobe to combat weather in flux.

Above: DIOR trench coat, $6,900, top, P.O.A., and skirt, $5,400. **Right:** GUCCI trench coat, $5,550, shirt, $1,450, jeans, $1,800, and shoes, $1,350. VAN CLEEF & ARPELS necklace, $14,000.

Scan the QR code to shop *Vogue*'s edit of the best of the trend.

Clockwise from above: RALPH LAUREN COLLECTION bag, $4,299; BALENCIAGA dress, P.O.A., and bag, $4,950; VALENTINO shirt and skirt, both P.O.A. VALENTINO GARAVANI tie, $690, and bag, $5,760; HERMÈS jacket, $25,615, pants, $14,585, and bag, $40,210.

To have and hold

From Ralph Lauren's structured proposition to Balenciaga's oversized tote, top-handle bags are a strapping way to go from here to there.

JAMIE HEATH
ALL PRICES APPROXIMATE DETAILS AT VOGUE.COM.AU/WTB

Bold strokes

The stiff formality associated with pinstripes gets a more comfortable makeover with languorous oversized cuts that allow for movement.

Left: VENROY top, $100. GEORGIA ROBINSON pants, $550. GIVENCHY shoes, P.O.A.
Right: SAINT LAURENT jacket, $4,290, top, $1,835, skirt, $2,145, and shoes, $1,710.

RALPH LAUREN jumpsuit, $4,549. CARTIER watch, $42,300.

JAMIE HEATH
ALL PRICES APPROXIMATE DETAILS AT VOGUE.COM.AU/WTB

Flat out

Prada's flower-appliqué slingbacks and Nensi Dojaka's slinky sandals prove flats can be just as compelling as their taller counterparts.

Above: STUDIO AMELIA shoes, $595. **Below**: NENSI DOJAKA shoes, $1,220, from Harrolds.

PRADA dress, $7,400, and shoes, $1,870.

JULIA BALDINI shoes, $820.

Scan the QR code to shop *Vogue*'s edit of the best of the trend.

MAX MARA dress, $1,485. ANNA KARIN KARLSSON glasses, $1,999, from One Point Seven Four.

MIU MIU jacket, $7,000. GENTLE MONSTER X D'HEYGERE glasses, $510.

Fully wired

Where chunky statement glasses once reigned, bookish wire frames are the optical trend of the moment, and it doesn't hurt that they're light as a feather.

GANNI dress, $425. L.G.R glasses, $560. VALENTINO GARAVANI lip ring, P.O.A.

LEE MATHEWS dress, $749. ADIDAS ORIGINALS glasses, $249, from Specsavers.

Scan the QR code to shop *Vogue*'s edit of the best of the trend.

JAMIE HEATH
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RALPH LAUREN

PINK PONY

"When someone we love has cancer,
we are all affected—husbands, wives, mothers
and fathers, sisters, brothers, and friends.
This is our effort in the fight against cancer."

Ralph Lauren

Join us in the fight against cancer

Globally, 25% of the purchase price from the sale of each item in the Pink Pony collection is directed to an international network of cancer charities. Within Australia, proceeds benefit Cancer Australia.

Peak demand

Saint Laurent's Anthony Vaccarello got to the point with one of the shoes of the season. A slick chocolate lustre and sharp lines mean business be it power lunching, or dressing. Service please.

SAINT LAURENT shoes, $1,625.

WORDS: ALICE BIRRELL
ALL PRICES APPROXIMATE DETAILS AT VOGUE.COM.AU/WTB

ART DIRECTION ARQUETTE COOKE **STYLING** ISABELLA MAMAS **PHOTOGRAPH** ANNA POGOSSOVA

VAN CLEEF & ARPELS
Zip Antique Ludo rose gold necklace set with rubies and pietersite and transformable into a bracelet, P.O.A.

Track changes

Jeweller Van Cleef & Arpels is equal parts dreamer and innovator, qualities at the fore when a duchess made a request that's now etched in bejewelled history. By Alice Birrell.

STYLING HARRIET CRAWFORD PHOTOGRAPH JAMIE HEATH

Sitting on a good idea is ill-advised in today's world, but for jeweller Van Cleef & Arpels, it paid dividends. A word in the ear of then artistic director Renée Puissant – daughter of the French jeweller's founders – by the Duchess of Windsor Wallis Simpson in 1938 (it helps to have friends in high jewellery), stoked a pursuit that lasted more than 10 years. Feats of technical artistry and devotion to innovation, and a sinuously supple necklace mimicking the humble zipper emerged in precious metal glory in 1950 – not something that can be rushed.

That a jeweller with utmost dedication to its craft would embrace the idea of a monarchy-defying, Schiaparelli-wearing duchess and rebel, is testament to Van Cleef & Arpels's spirit of evolution. Unbound by sleepy traditions, its creations have charmed and beguiled since 1906, unleashing a fierce savoir faire on gilt versions of flora and fauna, of the gestures of ballet dancers in full flight, and freezing in gold and platinum myths and legends. The zip then, stands out in its practicality and versatility, finding its way into some of the most prestigious jewellery boxes owing to its transformability: one of the first metamorphosing icons of jewellery, it can be recalibrated into a bold bracelet with the slick glide of the zip.

Born in the post-war era, its defining codes are a 50s decorous charm with 30s languor, its flexibility giving it a liquid drape underscored by signature tassel. Over time it has been studded and bordered with a variety of gemstones, from sapphires (as seen on Margot Robbie at the 2015 Academy Awards), sprays of rubies, filigree gold hearts, turquoise and pearls, and elongated into a slimmer, finer Zip Couture evolution.

And like couture, each demands a jaw-dropping amount of time to make – roughly 600 hours in total. So this rendition in round and baguette-cut rubies, and clocking in at an estimated 775 working hours, is an incontrovertible treasure worth waiting on.

From left: An original drawing of the Zip necklace design inspired by the Duchess of Windsor circa 1938; Renée Puissant circa 1930.

HAIR: RORY RICE MAKE-UP: NISHA VAN BERKEL MODEL: BIANCA MARTINELLO OTHER IMAGES: COURTESY VAN CLEEF & ARPELS ALL PRICES APPROXIMATE DETAILS AT VOGUE.COM.AU/WTB

dinosaurdesigns.com.au
DINOSAUR
DESIGNS

Water, baby

Long have Australians been the leaders in swim. The names to know now are out front in design, innovation, ethics but crucially, the way they each capture summer. Just add water.

WHO: FELLA X MAGGIE MARILYN
WHAT: The need-to-know collaboration.
New Zealander Maggie Hewitt of label Maggie Marilyn recognised a shared approach to the beach in Australian label Fella: "There's a lack of formality, and pretentiousness. Where else in the world can you go for an ocean swim before work?" Founders of 11-year-old label Fella, Rosie Iffla and Christine Tang-Corte, invited Hewitt as the newest of their many collaborators. Evolving Fella's core styles, Hewitt applied nautical stripes evoking memories of her mum's swimsuit won in summer "like a second skin". For Iffla's part, Fella's engineered fabric made to sculpt is key to customer loyalty. "You are at your most bare in public, so it makes sense if you feel good in a particular style, to keep buying it."

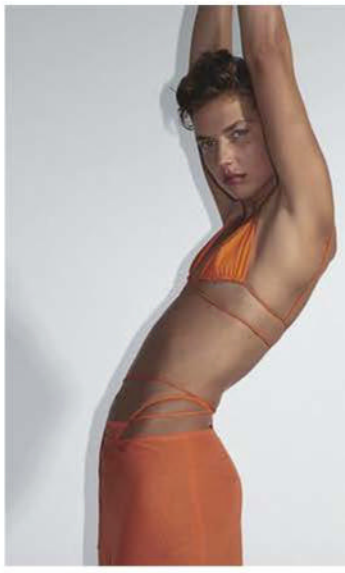
WHO: BONDI BORN
WHAT: The label entering a new era.
When working at a label known for its pared-back aesthetic, design is about refinement. "Great design is always a balancing act, and simple design must be scrutinised to perfection," says Natalia Grzybowski, new creative director of Bondi Born. Grzybowski's background is in ready-to-wear – she was previously at Lee Mathews – so she knows the impact of a subtle adjustment is only amplified on a piece worn so close to the skin. That's why she's approaching colour with equal consideration. "Too much and you lose the impact, too little and you don't achieve the impact." After a successful fashion week debut in Sydney this year, her output combines it all but adds a fresh energy with block colour and new shapes. Loyal fans will be reassured, though, she has a handle on the label's core mission: "We design to deliver women confidence."

WHO: CHRISTOPHER ESBER
WHAT: The fashion wunderkind doing swim.
Cues that Christopher Esber would turn his hand to swim abounded: meticulous about construction, preoccupied with fabric's interplay with the body, and an affinity with beach culture. Plus, his clothing cuts "often resemble a bikini or swimsuit", he astutely notes. Sculptural ruching and cut-outs and the weight of sometimes geode-adorned hardware mean fans of his cerebrally smouldering clothing can take the feel waterside. Ever an experimenter, Esber this season, his third year doing swim, is incorporating a surprising material, at least for the beach. "The casual element of cotton is unexpected and allows for quick drying and performance," he says of twisted and draped tankinis.

WHO: FAITHFULL THE BRAND
WHAT: The sustainability gold standard.
If Faithfull the Brand evokes a globetrotting free spirit, it might be because the co-founders Sarah-Jane Abrahams and Helle Them-Enger hail from Australia and Norway respectively, met in Bali and now sell worldwide. Plus the founders have an affinity with the 1960s and 70s (the double L is for Marianne). Manufacturing in Indonesia, they have deep respect for the natural environment, becoming certified B-Corp, a rigorous certification of social and environmental performance, in 2021. For Them-Enger, connection to nature began young. "My parents called me a fish because I spent more time in the water than out," she says.

WHO: EMILY WATSON
WHAT: The new cult label.
For upstart Emily Watson, swim is literally woven into the fabric of her designs. She's been making every piece of her ready-to-wear in signature Italian Nylon Lycra and uses a stitch type commonly employed for bikinis. "When starting my grad year in 2019, I felt there was room to experiment within the swimwear category," she reflects. "I came up with the idea to hybridise swim and resortwear." Which is why her diamond-shaped cut-out one-piece reads as ready for the party as the *playa*. There is a celebratory, footloose undercurrent emanating from her pieces; she hopes the wearer feels "sexy, fun and free". An evocation of summer if we've ever heard one.

WHO: FORM AND FOLD
WHAT: The all-inclusive label.
Carly Warson is recounting the way she and friend Stephanie Korn connect with customers of their label Form and Fold who share stories like "laughing about diving into the water and losing our tops". Spotting a grossly underserved sector of the market, they created a fashion-led label that ranges from D to G sizing. The care they put in – it can take 20 samples to perfect fit – has paid off. "We work with the very best in the business, highly skilled D+ cup-sized lingerie technicians." Their success is becoming international with stockists including Net-A-Porter and Matches. The latest conquest? The flimsy triangle top. "We've replaced the halter ties and thin back straps with components that actually support larger cup sizes."



WHO: ZIAH
WHAT: The master minimalist.
Brazil-born Australia-based designer Erika Toscan takes from her Brazilian roots – living in swim, flitting between beach and bar – to inform the design of her minimally minded swim label Ziah. "This vivacious way of life influenced my desire for creating swimwear you can layer with apparel." The ensuing maillots with spaghetti straps and sculptural bikinis borrow from eveningwear so they're as at home in a candle-lit restaurant under trousers as they are poolside. Most rewarding, she says, is customers embracing that approach in "swimwear tops as lingerie under sheer outfits … they're flattering, supportive". And they're made with a biodegradable polyamide yarn.

Scan the QR code to shop *Vogue*'s edit of the best swim labels.

WORDS: ALICE BIRRELL. PHOTOGRAPHS: COURTESY BONDI BORN AND CHRISTOPHER ESSER, LIANE HURVITZ, JORDAN MALANE, DAPHNE NGUYEN, PETER VAN ALPHEN, CLAUDIA SMITH

Silver service

When Danish jeweller Georg Jensen asked the founder of innovative knitwear brand A. Roege Hoeve to give her singular treatment to its Moonlight Grapes collection, the result was a bold enmeshing of craft and sculptural form.

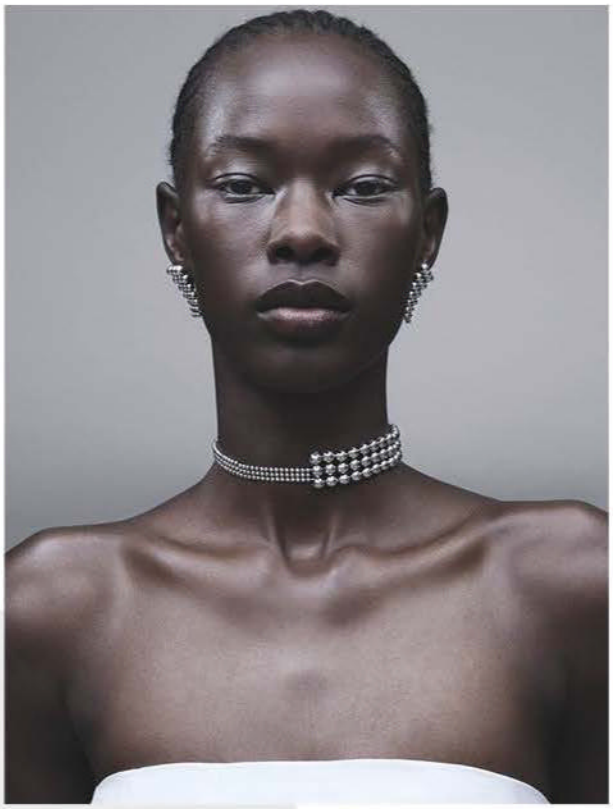
Full circles

Riffing off the grape's circular form, designer Amalie Røge Hove's aim was to give contemporary life to a beloved Georg Jensen classic. It's why the brooch, with its undulating wave, can be worn anywhere. Says Hove: "A silver brooch can be on the hip or neck, or on your bag." Or in the hair. Earrings, too, have a versatility; she imagines them adding sparkle to a rainy day. "Jewellery is really for everyday use," she outlays.

This page: ST. AGNI bra, P.O.A. CHRISTOPHER ESBER **skirt,** $3,595. GEORG JENSEN brooch, **in hair,** $785, **and** bracelet, $1,600. **Opposite page:** GEORG JENSEN earrings, **from top,** $350 each, and $550 each, and ring, $495.

STYLING KAILA MATTHEWS **PHOTOGRAPHS** JAKE TERREY

IN COLLABORATION WITH GEORG JENSEN
HAIR: SOPHIE ROBERTS. BRAIDS: BILLIE NYAK
MAKE-UP: ISABELLA SCHIMID MODEL: BILLIE NYAK
ALL PRICES APPROXIMATE DETAILS AT VOGUE.COM.AU/WTB



Haute collar

Interpreting the uniformity and repetition of knitwear's stitches, Hove reworked the jeweller's codes to capture her signature ribbing – to graphic effect. "Beads growing slightly bigger in systematic rows very much feels like our knitting language coming to life," she says. As seen in the necklace, where two rows of different scale give contrast.

BEARE PARK dress, $620
GEORG JENSEN earrings, $350 each, and necklace, $3,900.

Backward glance

Transposing the way knitwear yields to the body into metal was both a challenge and an intrigue for Hove, who worked to give hard materials fluidity. "They are all linked silver beads so the necklace is still 'soft' and will lay on the neck differently," she explains of the elegant drape of the collier.

ESSE dress, $950.
GEORG JENSEN earring, $350, necklace, $3,900, and ring, $495.

Fluid notion

A feeling of complexity yet simplicity is how Hove described the design goal she set for herself, echoing Georg Jensen's clean forms from the 70s and 80s while capturing her own youthful outlook. She's done it with these earrings: in a single fold they drip like liquid metal from the ears. "I feel we have captured both identities seamlessly and very beautifully," she says.

LA COLLECTION jacket, $1,860. ST. AGNI bra, P.O.A.
CHRISTOPHER ESBER skirt, $3,595. GEORG JENSEN earring, $550.

JAKE TERREY
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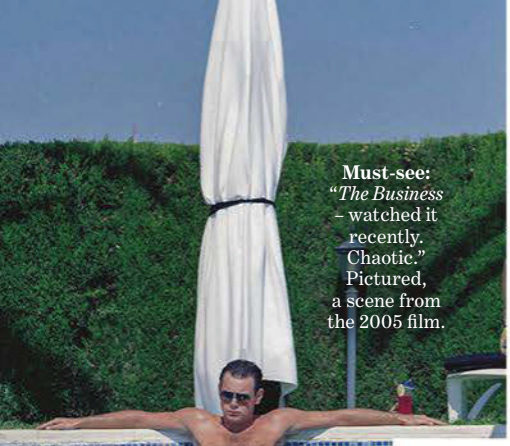


Must-see: "*The Business* – watched it recently. Chaotic." Pictured, a scene from the 2005 film.

Art fan: "[Photographer] Liz Johnson Artur. I've admired her work for years. There are so many stories within each photograph and I had the honour of working with her earlier this year [for the cover of *Falling or Flying*]."

British art curator Kate Bush with one of Orbe World's stools.

MARTINE ROSE shirt, $420, from vooberlin.com.

ORBE WORLD bench, $965, from orbe.world.

On high rotation: "Martine Rose. I live in her pink shirt at the moment. So cosy. My Kiko Kostadinov x Heaven khaki bag. It's practical and sexy too."

House proud: "My friend Jobe Burns who launched [furniture brand] Orbe World. I just love being inspired by my friends and getting to work with them too."

KIKO KOSTADINOV X HEAVEN BY MARC JACOBS bag, $590.

Jorja Smith

Sought after in fashion and her mainstay, music, the British singer-songwriter is attuned to the nexus of sound and culture. Here, she shares what's inspiring her across spheres.

Jorja Smith has done a lot in a short time – not just in music terms but in a life in totality. At just 26, the British singer-songwriter has won two Brit awards, was nominated for a Mercury prize and notched up a Grammy nomination. With two full-length albums – her second, *Falling or Flying*, has just been released after her 2018 debut, with 2021's EP *Be Right Back* sitting in between – she has a sizeable following (Instagram alone: 3.7m followers). Add to that work with Drake, FKA Twigs and Burna Boy and it's obvious why her latest album has been so keenly received. Longing, fragility and discovery and are all framed by her R&B, soulfully attuned to the gamut of joys and sorrows of life. Smith shares what she's tuned into now.

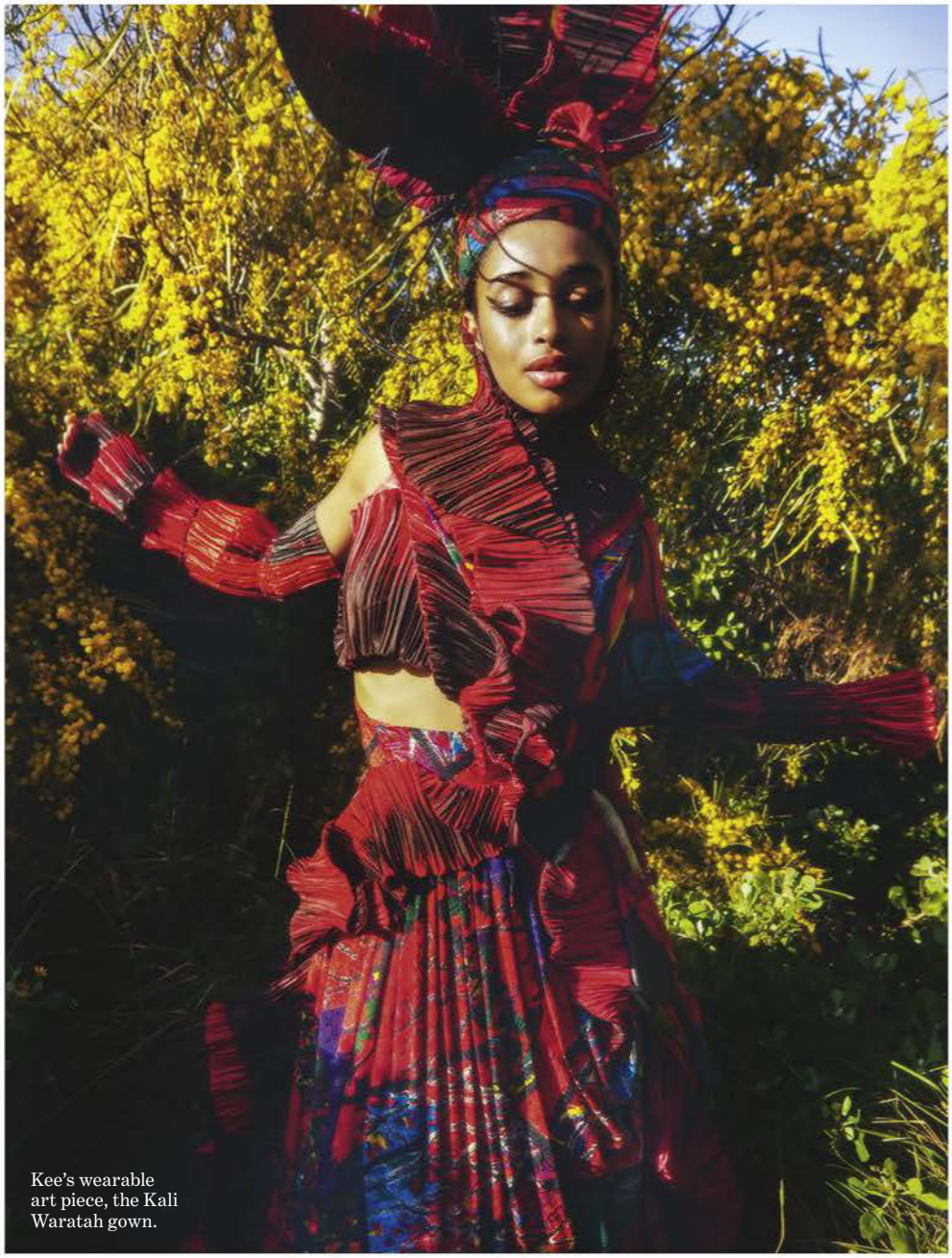
Formative sounds: "*Nostalgia, Ultra* (above) and *Channel Orange* by Frank Ocean were the soundtrack to my summer holidays and school, accompanied by sunsets, cut grass and forming long-time friendships."

MARTINE ROSE A/W '23/'24

WORDS: ALICE BIRRELL
PHOTOGRAPHS: ALAMY, RASHIDI NOAH
ALL PRICES APPROXIMATE DETAILS AT VOGUE.COM.AU/WTB

Left: *Letters to a Young Poet* by Rainer Maria Rilke. "[It] really helped me to be in the moment when I was stuck writing." **Right**: Natalie Portman in Wong Kar-wai's *My Blueberry Nights* (2007).

Unexpected touchpoint: "Wong Kar-wai films. No words really. You just need to watch them."



Kee's wearable art piece, the Kali Waratah gown.

Wild at heart

The irrepressible Jenny Kee, who exploded onto the Australian fashion scene in the 1970s, has created her final showstopper dress. She reflects how a creation can capture a life's memories. By Jonah Waterhouse.

STYLING HARRIET CRAWFORD PHOTOGRAPH JOSHUA BENTLEY

As you might guess from her lysergic, frenetically patterned prints, relaxation doesn't come naturally to Jenny Kee. But it wasn't until recent months at the age of 76 that she began to contemplate life at a slower pace.

"I can't get too excited [about work], or I'll get exhausted," she caveats on a call from Blackheath, the town in New South Wales's Blue Mountains where she's lived for almost 50 years. Anyone who knows the breadth and length of her career will know little would stop Kee. Sharing a brand-new piece she considers "a self-portrait" of her creative life, she says it will be the last of her dramatic art-meets-fashion dresses as she enters a reflective phase. "I'm not going to create those pieces again. I'm growing older, it's very beautiful … I like to feel like I'm leaving behind my legacy [in] my body of work." From living in 1960s London to meeting collaborator Linda Jackson on her return to Australia, to designing knitwear worn by Princess Diana, Kee has relied on intuition. Her

"There was this amazing fire that came right to the door of my property, and that was such an awakening for me"

new creation coincides with preparations to sell a large share of her work to museums across Australia, and this new creative endeavour marks a capstone on an era of creativity. "Is there a right time for anything? It's passion that drives me," she says decisively.

Both passion and experience shine through in Kee's Kali Waratah gown, a wearable art piece that comprises of a fascinator and dress with pleats, evoking the native bush flower. The bright colours and structured shape nod to her historic works, like the Earth First scarf and phantasmagorical wattle knits that channel Australian flora and fauna, and the Kali dress itself took six months to craft. "I feel like I've had a second coming since having that wonderful time with Linda, which was 50 years ago," she remembers.

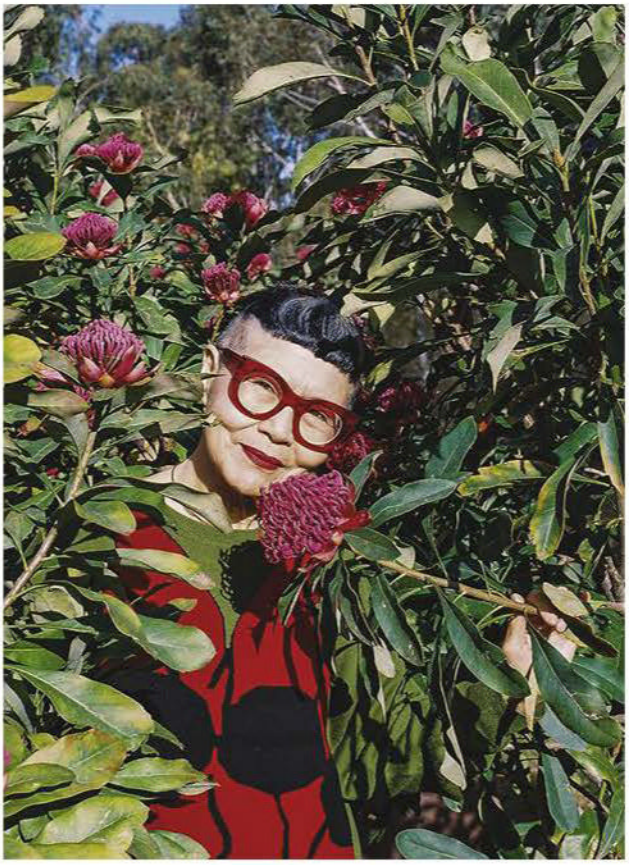
But aside from the waratah, the most obvious visual reference here are flames. Kali shares its name with the Hindu Goddess of Fire, and Kee reveals that the piece was informed by her experience with bushfires, which present a danger in summer. "In 1982, there was this amazing fire that came right to the door of my property, and that was such an awakening for me," she recalls. "Out of observing the terror of fire, but also … the beauty of fire."

Most see terror in blazes, but Kee became enamoured with the regenerative process that starts when the inferno departs and plants bloom again. The prehistoric waratah, which dates back millions of years, often rebounds first in charred landscapes, and to Kee, they symbolise resilience and strength. "I call them 'creatures in nature'. I used to just sit in the bush and be with them; they were my meditation, they calmed my troubles," she recalls.

Kee's forthcoming archive release is another reason for this nostalgia. While Kee can't yet share the details of which local museums will be acquiring her many personal pieces, she can reveal that she's parting with some of her dearest knits and silks. In her words, museums "very particular with what they like, but it's me who has to curate it".

While working, she was reminded of designing for the Sydney 2000 Olympics Opening Ceremony, where she was tasked with channelling the visuals of Africa and the Americas, doing so through similarly effervescent patterned dresses and costumes. "Working on those costumes was the highlight of my life," she shares, adding that the colours she was instructed to work with were red and black – a parallel with the red of the waratah, and the ashy black charring of burned trees. "There was a complete higher power involved," Kee muses wistfully.

Working alongside milliner Chloe Simcox during the Olympics added to the magic of her experience. Now, 23 years later, Kee consulted with Simcox to make the headpiece that accompanies her Kali dress and discovered she had archived rolls of the fabric Kee used for her Olympic gowns. These were then naturally woven into the composition of the dress as a nod to the past. "She's the technical and brilliant extension of my hand – I can't say anything about her that isn't poetry," she says. Kee may be contemplating life in a slower lane, but the fire inside her will always be alight.



Jenny Kee, above and below, on her property in the Blue Mountains, New South Wales.

MAIN IMAGE: HAIR & MAKE-UP: GEORGIA RAMMAN. MODEL: AMY SARR
PHOTOGRAPHS: (JENNY KEE) BETH WILKINSON. OAK PARK STUDIO

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60 THE AUSTRALIAN BALLET

Top of his field

Few milliners have topped as many famous heads as Stephen Jones OBE. Ahead of the Melbourne Cup Carnival, the friend of the Victoria Racing Club shares his hat wisdom from an illustrious, feather-filled career.

Stephen Jones is recounting a recent moment of unbridled creation. "A few moments before the haute couture show at Thom Browne …" he explains, the team decided "it would be more interesting if the masks actually floated above the head, rather than on the face. [But] how to achieve that?" The challenge was just another day in the life of the legendary milliner, whose bread and butter is making the impossible come to life. This recent example, at the haute couture debut of the luminous Browne in July, adds another feather to his very well-crafted cap, or beret, or trilby, depending on the day. Blazing a trail in the pulsating London club scene of the 1980s, he is today the most called-upon milliner to royalty, musicians and racegoers. As headwear takes over the runway of late, it has been a boon to milliners for race day. Jones has the inside word on how to come out on top this spring racing season.

VOGUE AUSTRALIA: **We are seeing an emphasis on headwear return to the runways . What do you attribute this to?**
STEPHEN JONES: "Putting a hat on shows individuality. It's the same for dress designers that use a hat in a show – it makes those quite simple clothes suddenly identifiable."
VA: **Which silhouettes and headwear, hats and accessories feel contemporary to you?**
SJ: "I think it's the variety which is contemporary and there is not one fashion. On the runway, just having a hat of any description is often a statement enough, but in racewear, the statement should be louder and more individual."
VA: **It feels the time is now to fully embrace millinery. What is the best way to push yourself outside your comfort zone?**
SJ: "Try it on back-to-front! Experiment! Millinery is a learning process so just go out there and see what the different milliners are doing. Each hat can bring out a different side and facet of your personality. Live the moment."
VA: **Millinery can be viewed by some as traditional. As someone who has created at the forefront of fashion throughout your career, how would you challenge this notion?**
SJ: "I think timescale is not relevant to fashion. For me, it's always been interesting that there is a historic reference to it, but to make something new is much more challenging and exciting."
VA: **You've made bespoke creations for the true originals in the realms of fashion, music and royalty. What did they teach you about creativity and accessories as self-expression?**
SJ: "For royalty, it's mostly being correctly dressed and not led by fashion, and the fact you're wearing a hat at all sends a very strong message. For pop stars, it can be part of the handwriting of their performance. Hats are an incredibly important tool to the music and the staging and the overall impression."
VA: **Hat, clothes, accessories, colour – which to choose first?**
SJ: "Get inspiration from the hat but buy the dress first and then go back and buy the hat."
VA: **A hat makes the outfit because …?**
SJ: "Clothing becomes fashion when there is a hat involved."

Melbourne Cup Carnival Fashions on the Field returns for 2023 and is also open to international racing and fashion followers via digital entries. Go to mccfashionsonthefield.com.

SCHIAPARELLI A/W '23/'24

THOM BROWNE A/W '23/'24

BALMAIN A/W '23/'24

CHRISTIAN DIOR A/W '23/'24

From left: Stephen Jones's work on the runway, and inspiration at Dior.

INTERVIEW: ALICE BIRRELL
PHOTOGRAPHS: FREDERIC ARANDA. GORUNWAY.COM

Sound of the city

Meet five on-the-rise music makers set to enthral a home crowd at Sydney's inaugural South by Southwest (SXSW) Festival.

WORDS JONAH WATERHOUSE AND HANNAH-ROSE YEE

For the first time in its history, the trailblazing festival of ideas SXSW will leave its home of Austin, Texas and head Down Under, taking over the thriving cultural hub of Sydney. It comes hot on the heels of a huge year for the Harbour City, from Sydney WorldPride to the FIFA Women's World Cup. And now, this month, Sydney's CBD plays host to thought leaders in industries including music, technology, gaming, art and film who will descend on our shores to speak about the creativity in shaping a new vision of the world. To celebrate, we check in with a group of young musicians taking part in the festival's world-class music program.

Elle Shimada

When she was 15, two life-changing things happened to the multidisciplinary DJ, producer and curator Elle Shimada: she moved to Melbourne from her native Tokyo, and she fell in love with music. "I didn't speak English, so music became my language," she shares. "I spent most of my teenage era playing violin, learning music production and jamming with people. Nothing changed since, really."

If you spot Shimada on the stage at SXSW Sydney, you'll likely see her with violin in hand, ready to spellbind audiences with her genre-busting blend of jazz and electronica; her influences include everyone from FKA Twigs and Little Simz to Björk and traditional Japanese music. (When not on stage at SXSW Sydney, look for her diving into the water at the beach.) "I love performing so much, I can do it every day and not get sick of it," Shimada enthuses. "I see every dance the same, small or big. I just want to be the realest bitch I can be and try and connect with the audience authentically." That's why she makes music, even when the industry itself can be tough for independent artists.

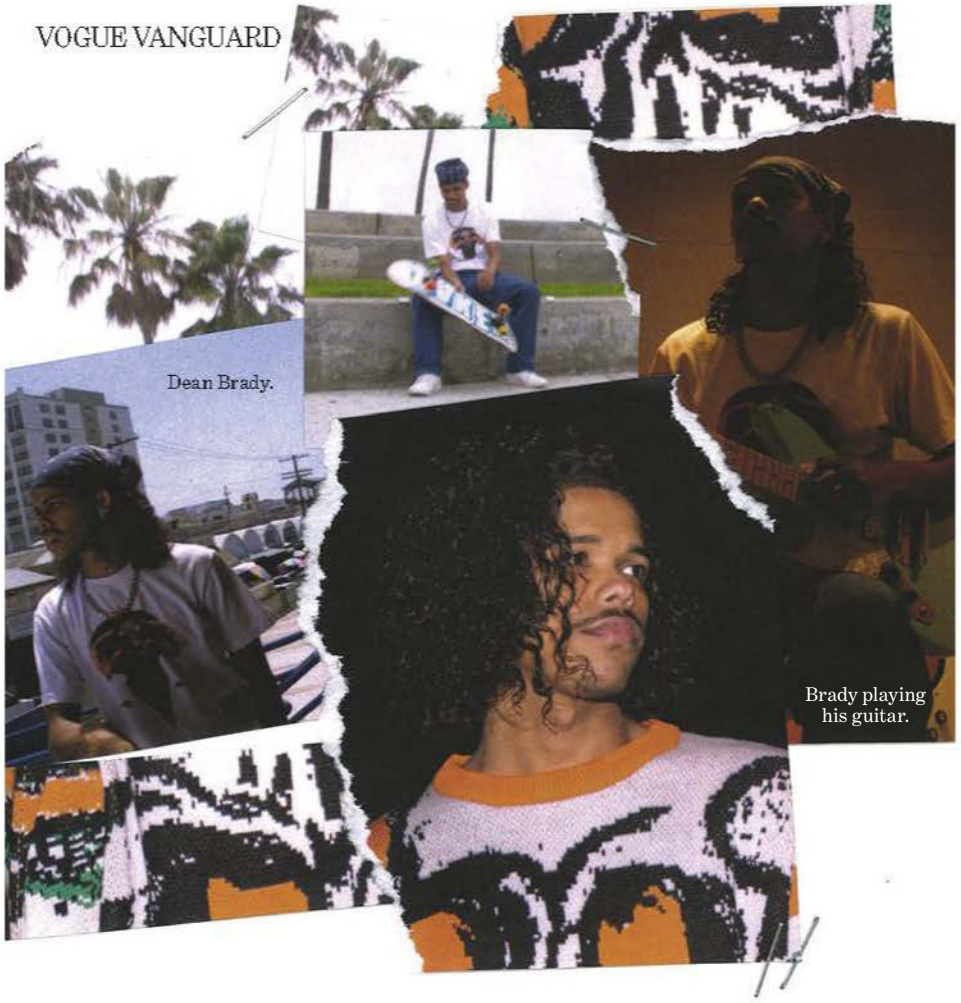
On her recent album *Home ≠ Location,* Shimada explored the "connective power of music" as its own kind of home. "A few times after a gig, a fan I've never met before would come up to me and tell me that the album has helped them feel more at home in their bodies, or that it has helped them find a sense of belonging," she says. "All those intimate and real interactions make me wanna keep going." *Hannah-Rose Yee*

INSTAGRAM: @ELLESHIMADA, @VINCENTTRAN.SEND

Elle Shimada.

Left: On set shooting the video for "Mononoke".

Shimada at work creating music.



Dean Brady

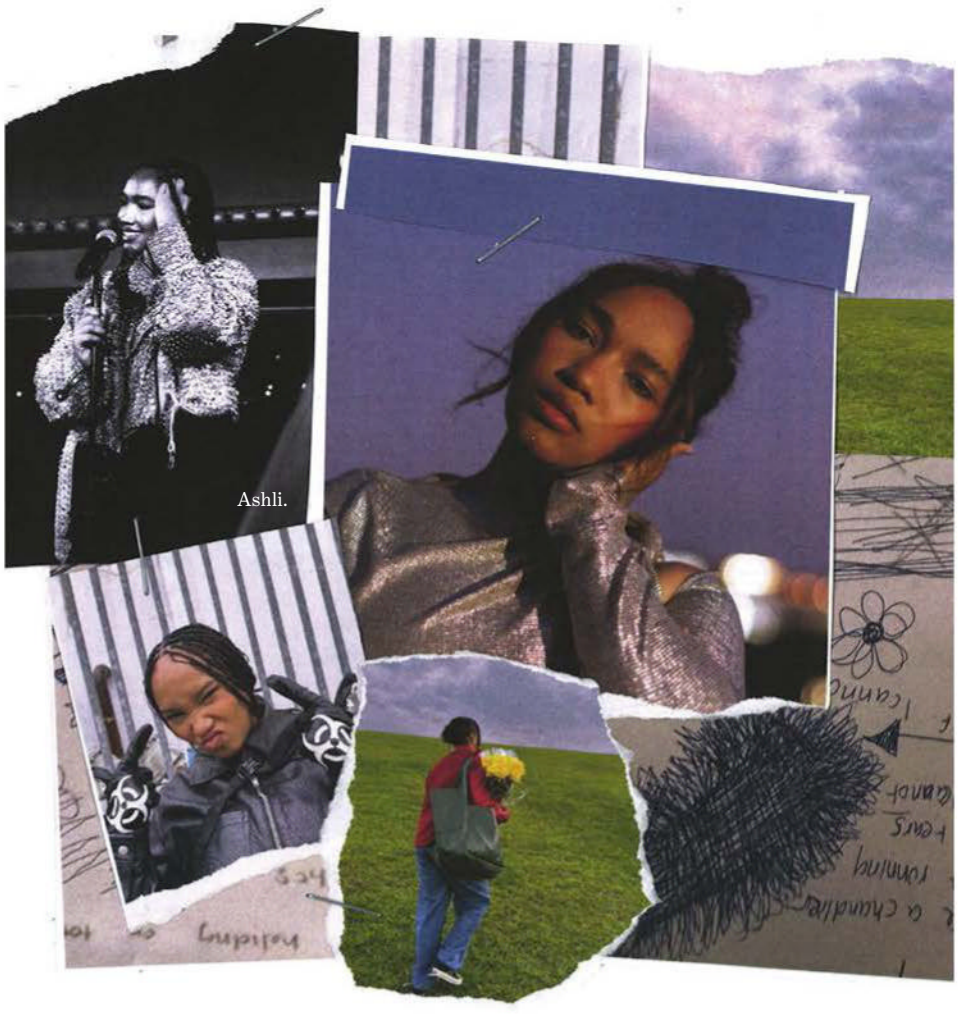
Parents often introduce their kids to great music, but it's not as often that parents are the music themselves. For Queensland singer Dean Brady, whose Zimbabwean mother and Indigenous Gugu Yalanji father make up the "outback motown" band Banawurun, he clearly learned from the best.

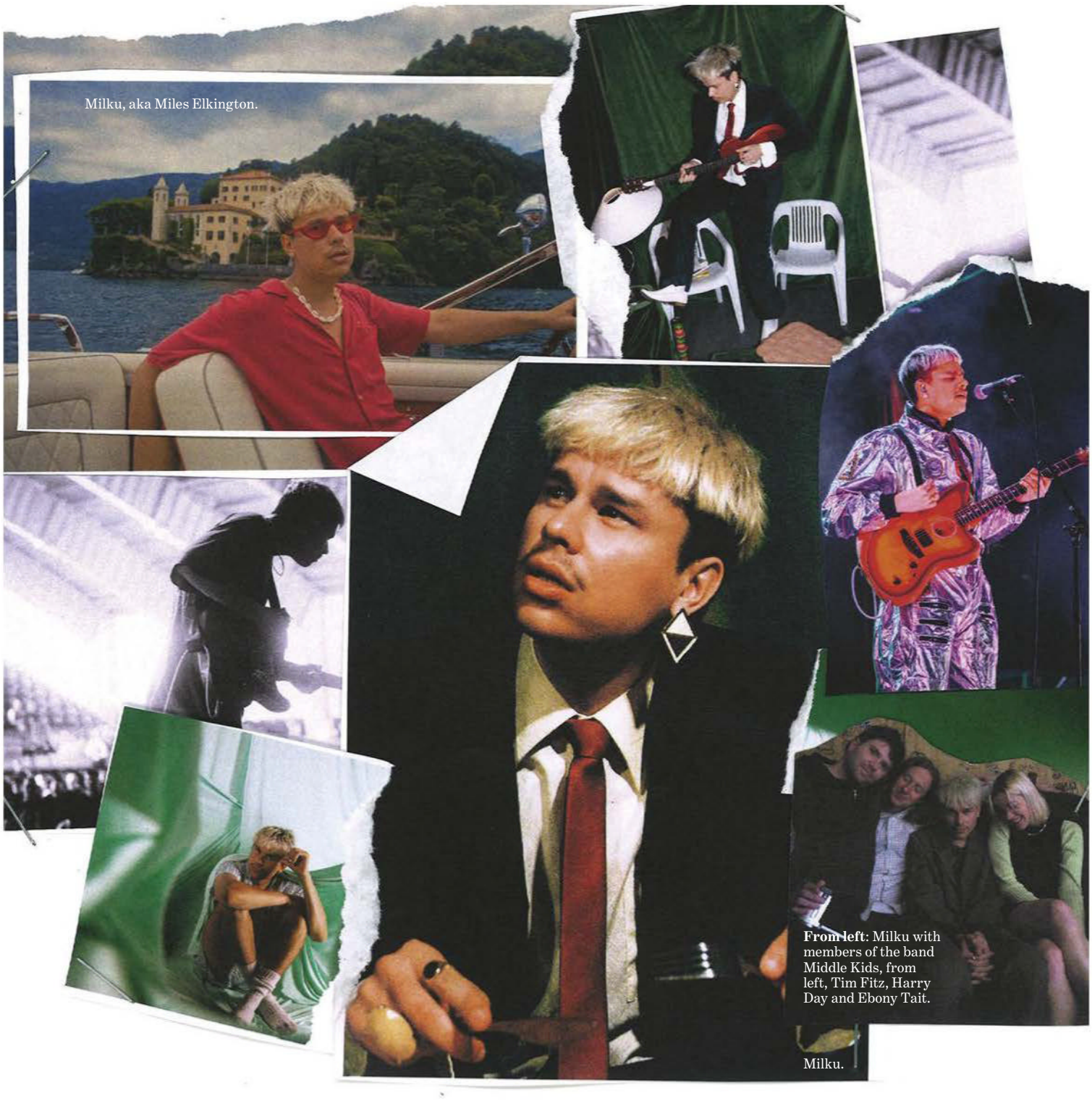
"I wouldn't be where I am today if it wasn't for my parents – they've always supported me in everything I've tried," he says. Hearing his voice, however, it's evident he would've made it either way. Brady's croon draws on legends like Stevie Wonder, while also being uniquely his own. His most recent song "Falling" is refreshing and danceable, moods he aims to encapsulate in everything he does. In his words: "I hope people just dance, just to get people in a good mood to express themselves non-verbally and just enjoy the music." Fans can expect to do as much at his SXSW concert this month. At only 21, Brady's outlook is astute. "The world is full of other awkward people who are just trying to make it through the day and have good experiences," he says. "Everyone gets nervous and stressed and it's okay to feel that way." *Jonah Waterhouse*

Ashli

"To me, songwriting is a puzzle, and when a piece clicks into place, it's the best feeling," says Ashli. The singer-songwriter has a soulful sound rooted in narrative lyrics. On her single "Fields", it's the tale of blissful love, "Only One", it's the teenage ache for more. "I'm always looking for the story and I'm always trying to do what feels most authentic to me. I never want to compromise not even one lyric because it is catchy or cool," she says.

The dedication is paying off. Ashli is not only playing at SXSW Sydney, she also performed at SXSW Austin earlier this year. It was the first time in more than a decade that the singer had returned to the US, where she grew up, and her first time travelling overseas as an artist. "It was a huge milestone for me," she says, as will be Sydney's SXSW. "It feels like the world is coming to us and it's so exciting!" After her childhood in New Jersey, Ashli returned to her mother's home of Western Sydney for high school. "I'm so grateful I've grown up here on Darug Country, in the same neighbourhoods as her," she says. "There has always been talent in Western Sydney. Artistic brilliance has always lived here." *HRY*





Milku, aka Miles Elkington.

From left: Milku with members of the band Middle Kids, from left, Tim Fitz, Harry Day and Ebony Tait.

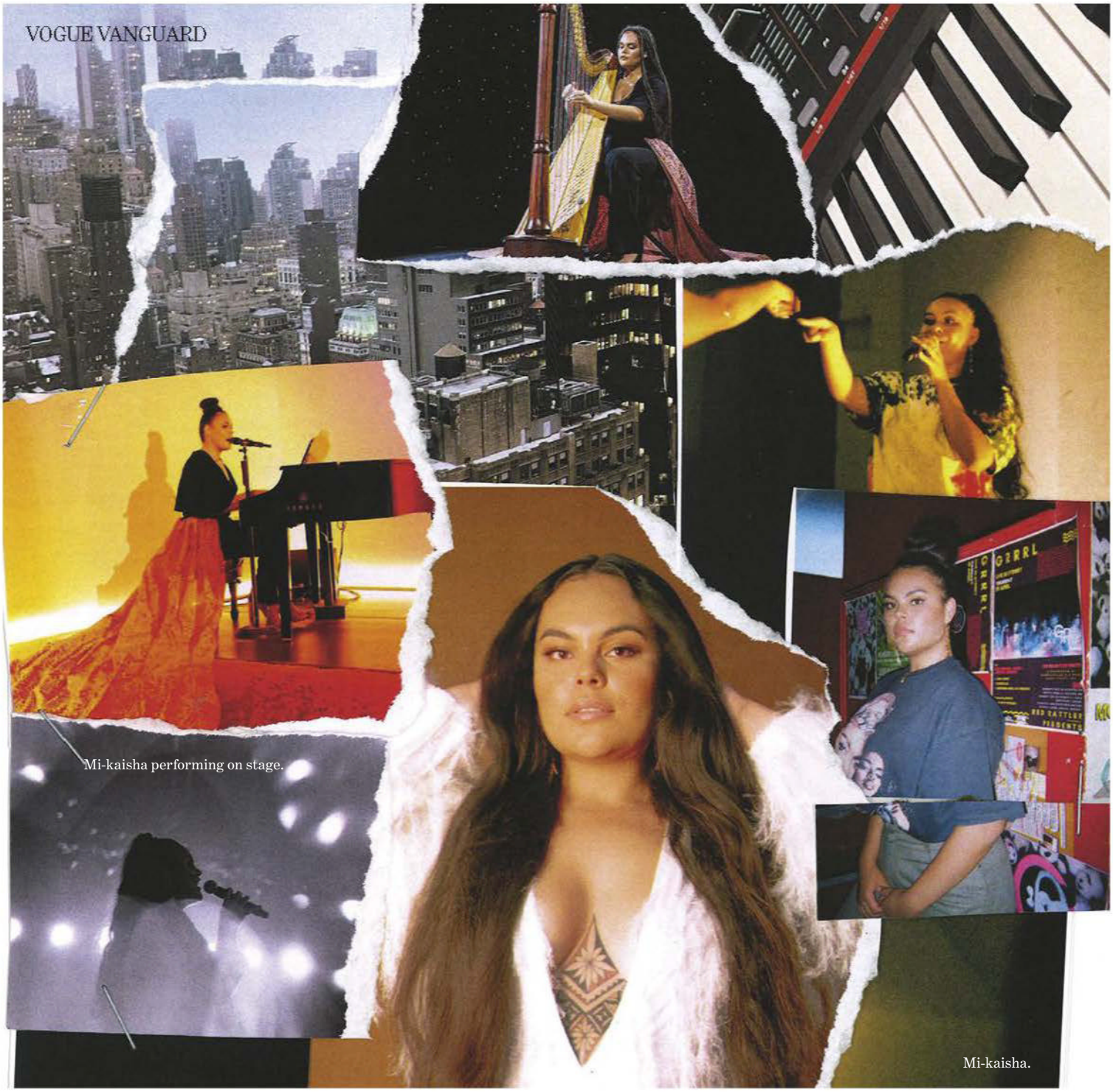
Milku.

ZAC BAYLY, JESS GLEESON, NATHANIEL GUENTHER
INSTAGRAM: @ASHLITV, @DEAN.BRADY, @MILKULOVESU

Milku

There's something uniquely cathartic about a song with sad lyrics dressed in a toe-tapping beat. It's an art form Darwin-raised singer Milku – alias for Miles Elkington – is a budding pro at creating, and he credits the work of seminal band Radiohead for clicking his love for melancholy tunes into place. "Radiohead made it seem cool to be weird and awkward and sad," he says. "I still remember when the end of *OK Computer* flicked over to *Kid A*'s "Everything in Its Right Place"… I sat, heart caught, for three minutes at the sound of that synth and [lead singer] Thom Yorke's vocals. I knew I wanted to make music like that."

2023 has been a big year for Milku. The success of his music, from synth-pop banger "Alone" to lovestruck tune "Real Like a Feeling" culminated in a performance at Splendour In The Grass in July, and he is also touring guitarist with indie band Middle Kids. Now he is performing at SXSW Sydney among a global line-up of acts. While such an event might be intimidating, his electric Harbour City show will be festooned in the bright colours and bold costumes that have become a signature comfort; in his words, a "big party" that his younger self would've loved. "I'm really interested in childhood and moving past irony and cynicism into sentimentality, so I tend to like bright colours, handwriting and things that look a bit stupid," he shares. "It's fun." Speaking of fun, there's one musician Milku dreams of collaborating with. "Damon Albarn, from Gorillaz and Blur. I don't know if he reads *Vogue* Australia, but email me, dude." *JW*



Mi-kaisha performing on stage.

Mi-kaisha.

Mi-kaisha

Tranquillity and fragility find a middle ground in Mi-kaisha's work. Take the young Darumbal Murri and Tongan singer's newest song "Seen", which backs liberated lyrics with gentle instrumentals, embodying wisdom that belies her 23 years. "My creative process often involves me trying to get out of my own way … I'm most creatively productive when I'm able to sift out anxious thoughts and just enjoy the flow," she says.

Growing up in Sydney, Mi-kaisha moved to New York after high school and graduated in May from NYU with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Recorded Music, minoring in Native American and Indigenous studies. The latter furthered her knowledge of indigenous cultures around the world, a topic of personal significance. "Growing up as an Aboriginal and Tongan woman, I have always been connected to these strong, staunch and gorgeous communities," she says. "I am the woman I am today because of them and everything I do as an artist and songwriter is for them."

Now back in Australia, Mi-kaisha will take the stage at SXSW Sydney to share her affecting tunes in front of a home crowd. By then, she'll have released her new song "Eternity", which is about the strength she feels from the communities that raised her. Surrounded by the passion of other Australians at the event, she's already feeling the creative flow. "We are going to show up and show out … I cannot wait to celebrate our homegrown talent and the ways in which we're pushing boundaries, breaking moulds and just being deadly." *JW*

SXSW Sydney runs from October 15–22. For more information, go to sxswsydney.com.

MATT CRUMP. GARRETT LOBAUGH. MICHAEL WRIGHT
INSTAGRAM: @IAMMIKAISHA

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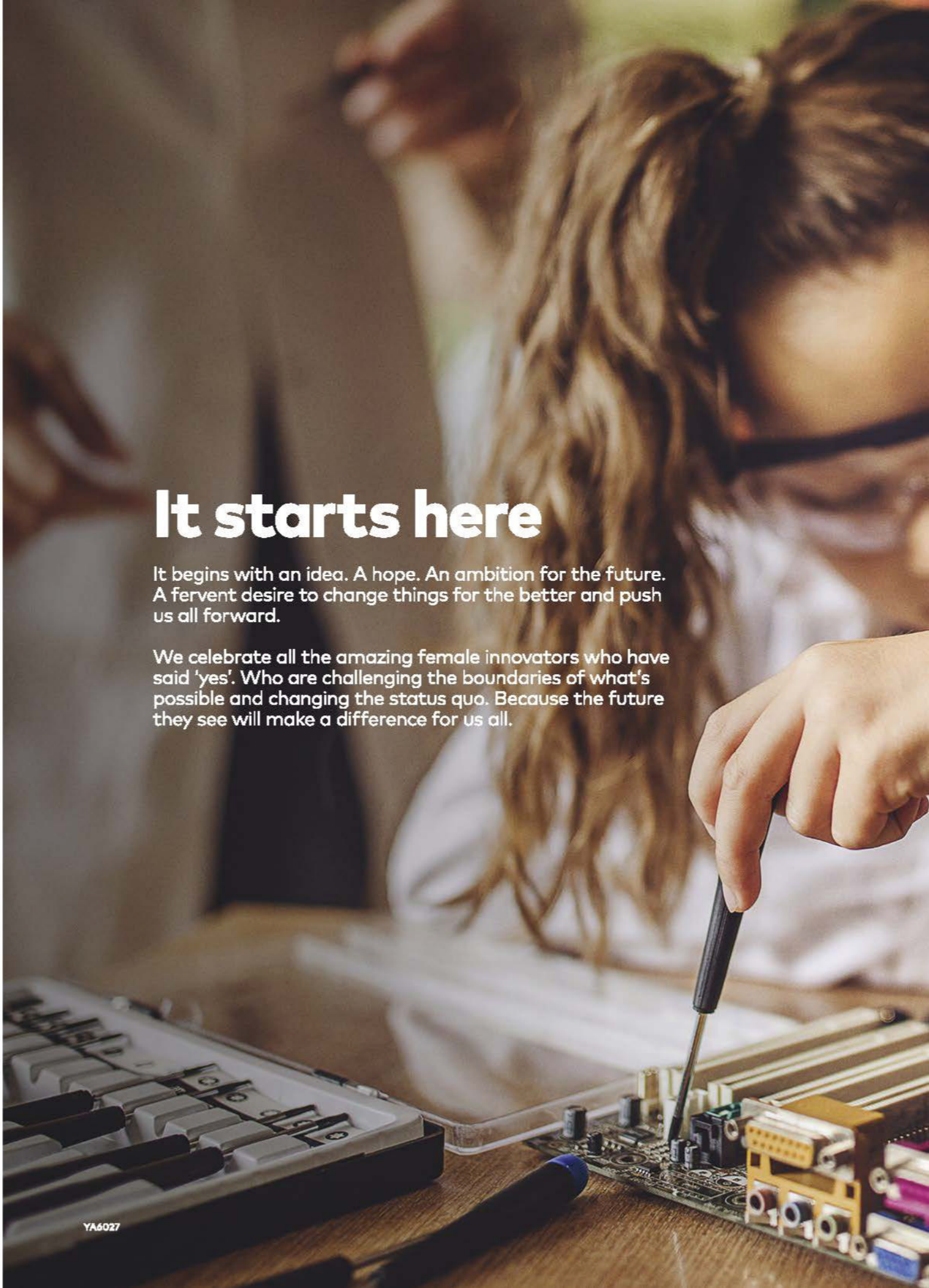

It starts here

It begins with an idea. A hope. An ambition for the future. A fervent desire to change things for the better and push us all forward.

We celebrate all the amazing female innovators who have said 'yes'. Who are challenging the boundaries of what's possible and changing the status quo. Because the future they see will make a difference for us all.

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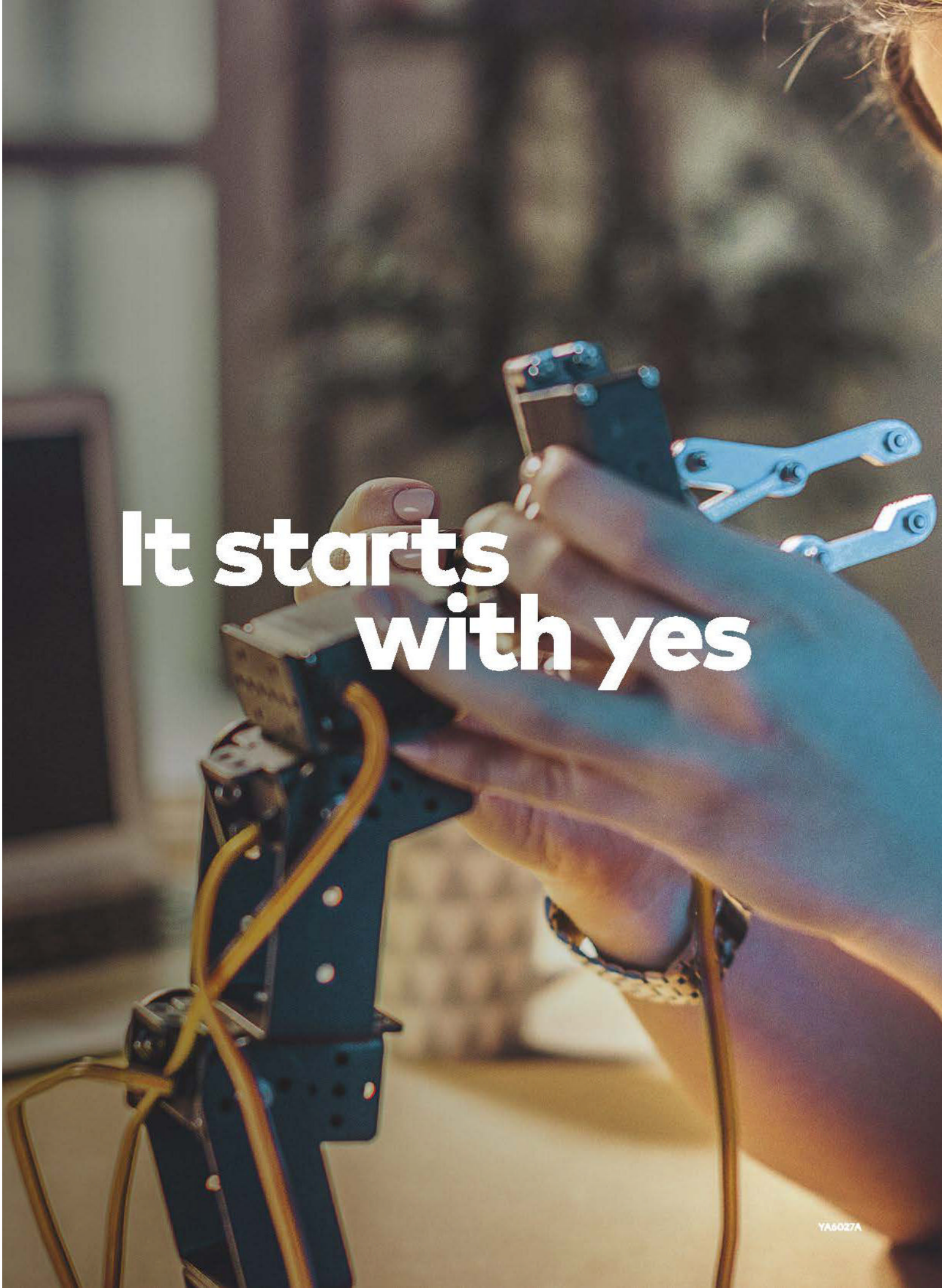
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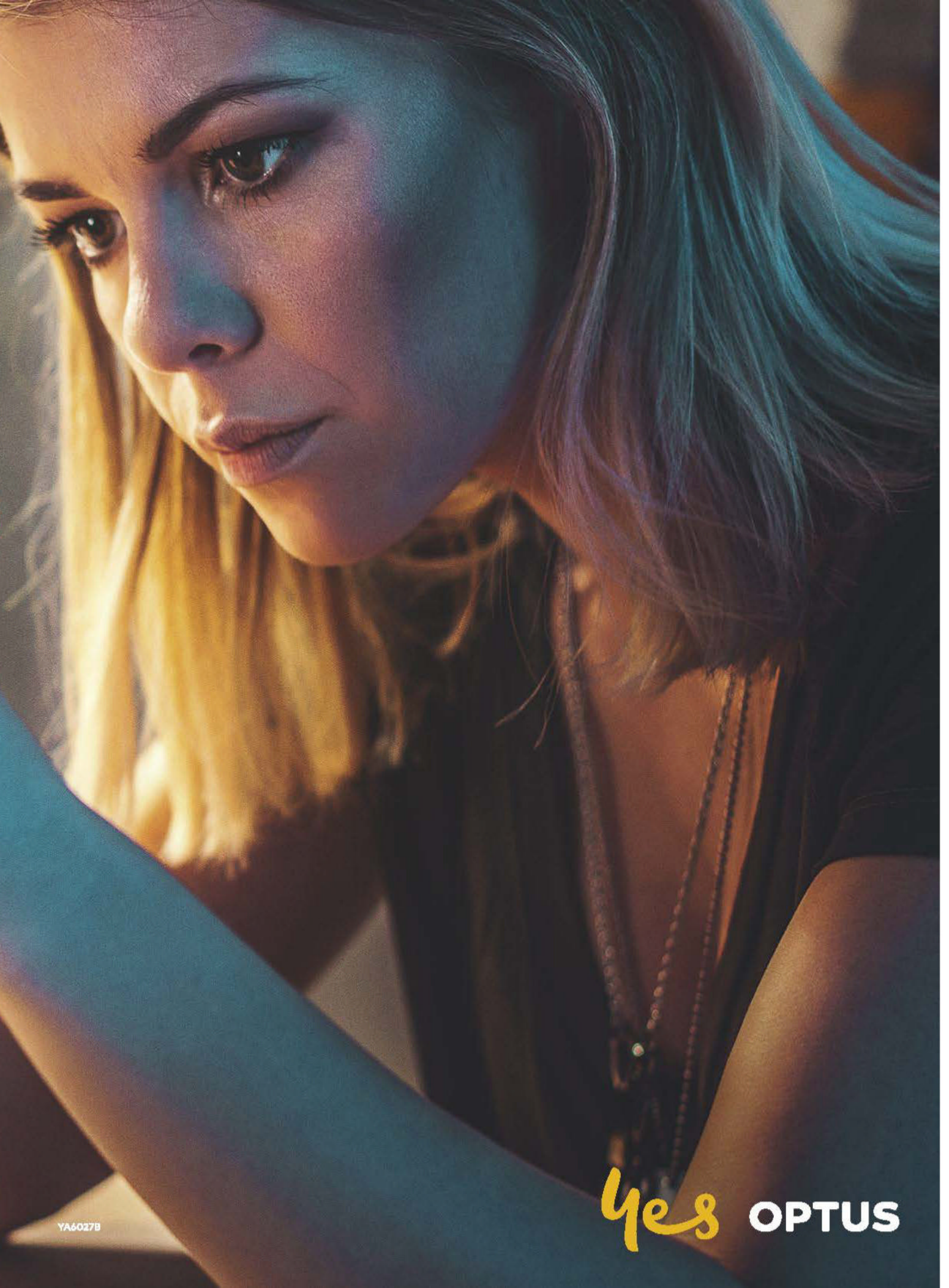
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DINNIGAN BY DESIGN

After a decade of creating elegant, feminine, timeless designs, Collette Dinnigan's eye for style is still hitting highs in the optical arena.

GO FOR GLAM

Collette Dinnigan Specsavers Sun RX 38 in black.

A VISION OF THE FUTURE

There are few names more synonymous with Australian style than Collette Dinnigan. Her signature eyewear collection, featuring flattering, timeless frames, launched exclusively with Specsavers 10 years ago. The collection offered a combination of eye-catching statement pieces and subtle, understated designs, perfectly capturing Dinnigan's sartorial charm.

"In the beginning it was a challenge," recalls Dinnigan, of her evolution from clothing to eyewear. "I had come from an intensely creative background, never following any trends but making them for my own brand."

Reflecting on designing her collection of beautiful frames over the past 10 years, the designer says it's all about wearability.

"I've tried to give the range a fashion edge, which means listening to my intuition and allowing space and time to work," she says.

Dinnigan has incorporated a forward-thinking approach to her collections.

"Sustainability across all touchpoints has been important, as well as being able to work on new acetates and colours with the new technology available – it's created a fresh perspective," she says.

"I'm proud of the 10 years we've been in partnership together and of all that we've achieved in that time. I'm particularly proud of developing the very popular children's eyewear line and our new limited-edition collection, which celebrates a 10-year milestone with this superbrand."

Left: Bianca Spender dress. Zara pearl hoop earrings. Sener Besim earrings.
Above: Zara trench coat, shirt and pants. By Charlotte bracelet. Lucy Folk cuff.
Above right: Oroton jacket, blouse and pants. By Charlotte bangle. New Balance sneakers.

Collette Dinnigan × Specsavers

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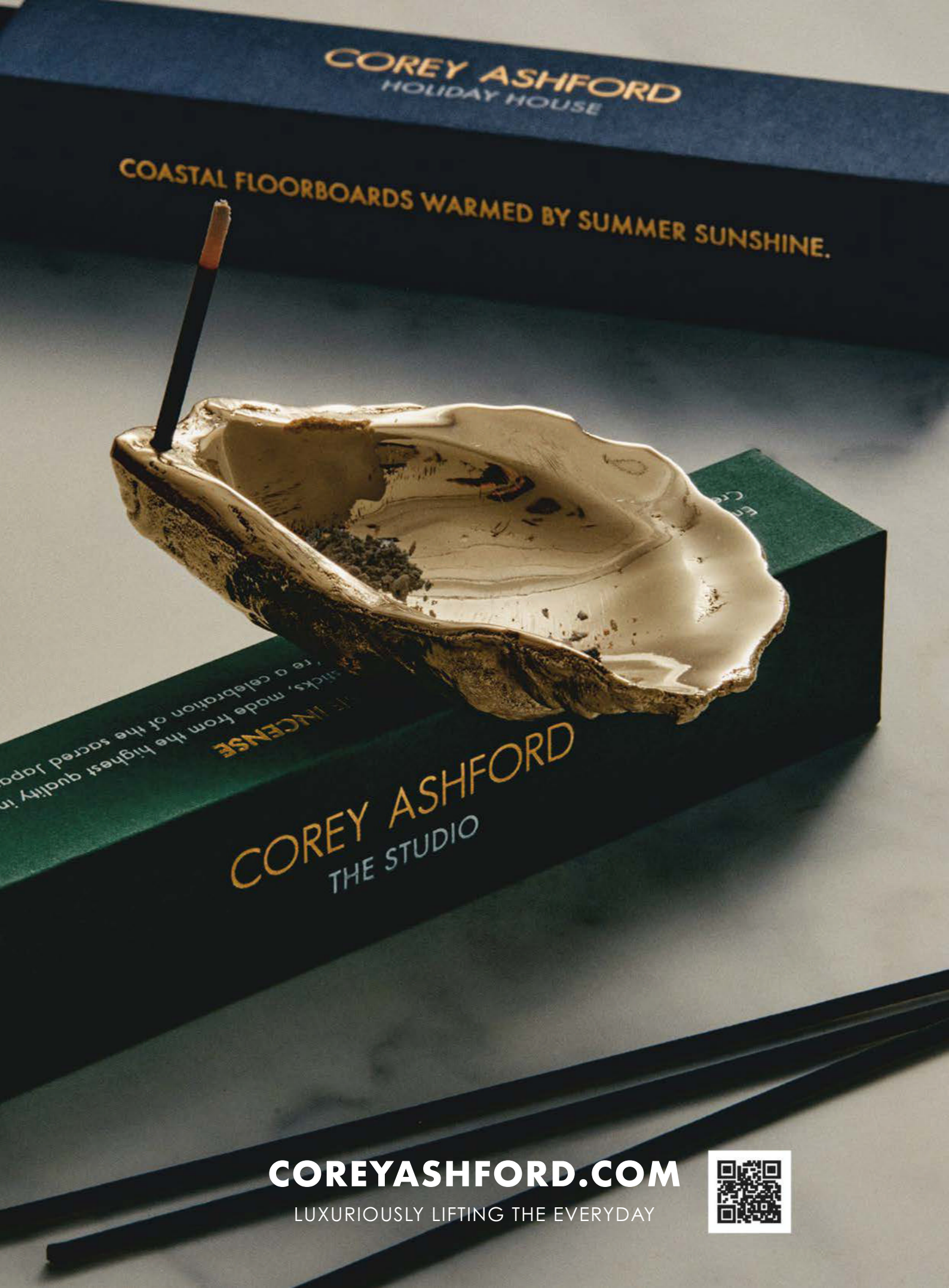
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LUXURIOUSLY LIFTING THE EVERYDAY

Chloë Sevigny wears a MIU MIU cardigan, $ 2,370, sweater, $2,130, skirt, P.O.A., and tights, $465. CHURCH'S X MIU MIU shoes, $1,890.

In her shoes

The always-original Chloë Sevigny tries out the surprising new collaboration between Miu Miu and Church's. By Liam Hess.

It's a baking hot summer evening in Connecticut, and Chloë Sevigny is preparing to try on a shoe. She's spending the week with her parents and her three-year-old son while her husband, gallerist Siniša Mačković, travels to an art fair. "I thought it would be more fun than single-parenting in the city for a week," Sevigny says with a wink from her brother's bedroom, where she's illuminated only by the glow of her iPhone screen over FaceTime.

From a powder pink box, with all the ceremony of a white-gloved art handler appraising a masterpiece, Sevigny lifts a pair of brogues in lacquered tobacco leather. The piece is the product of a new collaboration between Miu Miu and British shoe manufacturer Church's: available as either a lace-up or a monk strap, in black or tobacco-glossed brushed leather, the shoes were first spotted on the runway of Miu Miu's autumn/winter '23/'24 collection. (The eagle-eyed among us might also have sighted them being worn by Miuccia Prada herself while taking a bow at the end of the Prada menswear show in June.)

"They feel light as air," she says, slipping her foot into the shoe with the assistance of a shoehorn. "Whenever I find other brogue enthusiasts, they're always talking about Church's, so this is an exciting day for me." The British craftsmanship of Church's prized by Sevigny's fellow enthusiasts is present and correct, of course, but it's the quirkier details – moulded rubber soles and an embossed logo on the side, for example – that speak to Miu Miu's involvement and make them feel, well, Sevigny. "Classic with a twist," she says, as she turns her ankles from side to side to appraise how they look. "I want to run down the street and jump!"

For Sevigny, the appeal of Miu Miu's autumn/winter collection also runs a little deeper. As the latest chapter in the brand's renewed hot streak over the past few seasons, Miuccia Prada's whimsical vision of a "frazzled Englishwoman"– from frizzy fringes and sheer polka dots to tweeds and corduroy and (perhaps most shocking of all) athleisure-adjacent grey marl hoodies and leggings – has already become a viral sensation. "To me, it was all classic Miu Miu," Sevigny says. "She's always done the underwear-showing, all the way back to when I walked for her – it's actually very timeless."

Sevigny would know: her first runway show with the brand was in New York in 1995, just two years after the label had launched and soon after the release of Harmony Korine's →

STEFAN RUIZ
ALL PRICES APPROXIMATE DETAILS AT VOGUE.COM.AU/WTB

MIU MIU jacket, $10,500, top, $2,460, skirt, from $6,000, and tights, $465. CHURCH'S X MIU MIU shoes, $1,890.

Clockwise from top left: Sevigny in a Miu Miu ad campaign from 1996; Miuccia Prada wearing the collaboration at her and Raf Simons's recent men's show; Sevigny for Miu Miu spring/summer '96.

Kids, which catapulted Sevigny to a certain kind of underground fame. "Miuccia has always embraced and championed young actresses, especially those of us making more controversial choices," she says. "I don't want to say it validates you, but it's nice to have someone in fashion not just dressing you, but really celebrating you." The feeling is clearly mutual. Not only has Sevigny starred in campaigns for the label many times since, but she also returned to walk for Miu Miu in 2018; the year before, she directed a short film that premiered as part of the brand's Women's Tales program.

Her latest Miu Miu moment also arrives at a time of feverish interest in Sevigny's style. A quick skim through her hashtag on TikTok reveals an endless stream of throwback Sevigny looks – though it's easy to argue that this interest has never really gone away. There have been recent runway turns for Simone Rocha and Proenza Schouler, as well as an appearance in a fairytale-themed book for the cult London brand Chopova Lowena. There was her subversive take on bridal for her 2022 wedding, which featured daring looks from the likes of Glenn Martens for Jean Paul Gaultier Couture, Loewe and Mugler, the latter featuring a waist-snatching bustier and eye-popping sheer lace panels. And then, of course, there was that closet sale.

"It was insane," she says, laughing, of the spectacle in Manhattan in mid May that dominated Instagram feeds around the world for the day – and came about simply because Sevigny felt her wardrobe needed a clear-out. Titled "Sale of the Century" and organised by *Vogue* US writer Liana Satenstein, shoppers waited for up to four hours in lines snaking around the block to get their hands on Sevigny's pieces, many of which dated back to the 90s, when she was first enshrined as "the coolest girl in the world" by the author Jay McInerney. Most curious of all was its cross-generational appeal, with Gen Z vastly outnumbering those who were actually around for the first phase of Sevigny's career. (Olivia Rodrigo picked up a plaid Versace dress that she proudly showed off in a video for *Vogue* US: "A girlfriend gave that to me for my 40th birthday!" Sevigny says, beaming.)

Decades past, Sevigny has a few theories. "I like to think that my choices as an actress when I was younger really helped generate that kind of interest," she says. "Making films that were challenging and exciting, like *Gummo* and *Party Monster* and *Boys Don't Cry* – films that are really staples of alternative youth culture now – I think helped propel people's interest in my fashion." Was the sale emotional, given Sevigny's deep attachment to the clothes she wears? "Weirdly … no?" she says, after a pause. "When you're ready to let go of it, you're just ready."

Over the past few years, one gets the sense that Sevigny has mellowed a little. Chalk that up to marriage, or motherhood, perhaps, but it also has something to do with the new phase she's entered in her acting career along with her increasing focus on directing: with four shorts under her belt, she's currently shopping around a feature-length project. Next on the slate, however, is the new Gus Van Sant–directed season of Ryan Murphy's *Feud*, which charts the fallout between Truman Capote and his high society "swans". Sevigny will be playing the socialite and style icon C. Z. Guest – meaning plenty of fabulous outfits. "The clothes are great, but the shoes are terrible," she says with a laugh of the "dowdy" 70s pumps. (Thankfully, she managed to sneak one pair of Chanel heels into the mix.)

Still, despite playing dress up as a high-glamour princess for months of filming, Sevigny insists that the Upper East Side approach to dressing hasn't rubbed off on her, even as she says it's "something to aspire to as I'm getting older – more of an elegance". But Sevigny has her own kind of aspirational elegance: it's the kind that can take a humble Oxford shoe and elevate it to something that feels daring, unexpected, or subversive. There's a reason, after all, that a youth-focused brand like Miu Miu has returned to Sevigny again and again over the decades.

"Have I outgrown Miu Miu?" Sevigny muses, then lets out a peal of laughter. "I hope I never do. There's a sophistication to Prada, and I don't know if I'm quite there yet. I still like the fun of Miu Miu. It feels a little less … I don't know – you're a writer, you should be helping me here! Just a little more playful. Is that the right word?" I couldn't have put it better myself. ■

GETTY IMAGES, GORUNWAY.COM, STEFAN RUIZ
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THE STAGE IS SET

Your official invitation to Australia's biggest show of fashion – Melbourne Cup Carnival Fashions on the Field – has arrived. Choose your brightest ensemble, fasten your fascinator and hit RSVP.

COLOUR MAGIC

Even if you've long considered yourself a devoted minimalist, you have likely found yourself gravitating towards the bright side recently. While quiet-luxury dressing has hit peak domination, spring brings with it a shift towards a more vibrant, colourful palette. And there's no better place to express your style than at Australia's biggest show of fashion.

This year's Melbourne Cup Carnival Fashions on the Field promises to be nothing short of magical. Think barely there slip dresses in pale, dreamy hues; intricate embellished detailing; and bold, statement-making suits. It's guaranteed to be a showing of first-class fashion.

Bringing together the Best Dressed and Best Suited Competitions, plus the Lillian Frank AM MBE Millinery and the Emerging Designer Awards, Fashions on the Field will be a celebration of style, creativity, individuality and (undoubtedly) eye-catching colour. And, with a total prize pool of over $300,000, it's an event that shouldn't be missed.

Entrants into the Best Dressed and Best Suited competitions can enter on course during Cup Week on Penfolds Victoria Derby Day on Saturday, 4 November; Lexus Melbourne Cup Day on Tuesday, 7 November; or Kennedy Oaks Day on Thursday, 9 November. Finalists – which for the first time this year will include local, national and international fashion enthusiasts – will take centre stage on Kennedy Oaks Day.

Don't miss out on an incredible week of fashion at Melbourne Cup Carnival.

Enter on course for this year's Fashions on the Field to prove your style status.

FASHIONS ON THE FIELD

Enter at **mccfashionsonthefield.com.**

This page and opposite: Amber Scott wears a MICHAEL LO SORDO dress, $790. VAN CLEEF & ARPELS earrings, $28,200. WOLFORD tights, $50. Her own pointe shoes, worn throughout.

Swan song

Amber Scott had one dream before she hung up her pointe shoes for good: to dance in *Swan Lake* one last time. By Jane Albert.

STYLING HARRIET CRAWFORD PHOTOGRAPHS JAMIE HEATH

When Amber Scott was just four years old she attended her first ballet, a production of *Swan Lake* in Brisbane performed by London's Royal Ballet. From the moment the curtain rose she was transfixed. Then a strange thing happened. As the white swans began their graceful entrance, arms elegantly winging up and down, the small child in row F began emulating them, much to the amusement of her fellow audience members.

"I was on the edge of my seat, doing swan arms," recalls Scott with a laugh. "So mum decided to take me to ballet class. *Swan Lake* was pivotal in me becoming a ballerina."

In fact, *Swan Lake*, the achingly beautiful, tragic story of evil sorcery and unrequited love, would ultimately play a seminal role throughout Scott's whole career after she was accepted into The Australian Ballet in 2001. Various productions of the perennially popular ballet have taken her from New York to Paris, provided a career breakthrough when she was tapped to dance the lead role in Graeme Murphy's *Swan Lake* while still a junior dancer in 2004; and debuting that same lead role in the world premiere of Stephen Baynes's production in 2012.

So it is bittersweet that *Swan Lake* will play a final, memorable role in the life of this beloved dancer. After a career spanning two decades, Scott, now 40, has decided to retire and The Australian Ballet's 60th anniversary production of *Swan Lake* will be her last. She will farewell the stage, her devoted audience and the company that has been her home and family for all her adult life.

There's never a right time to retire from a career as a professional ballerina, a career that already has a short lifespan given its punishing physical demands; but if she could pick the most appropriate production for her farewell, *Swan Lake* would be it.

The principal artist had not long returned to the company following the birth of her second daughter, Marion, in early 2022, and was driving to pick up older daughter Bonnie. "I was listening to ABC Classic and *Swan Lake* came on. I love the music so much and thought, 'Wouldn't it be amazing if I could be strong enough to dance it again in the upcoming season.' I'm so lucky I've been able to dance this long because you never know what your body's going to do, what life will happen," she says. "I've danced *Swan Lake* a lot around the world, so dancing this for the last time really will be full circle." →

HAIR: RORY RICE. MAKE-UP: NISHA VAN BERKEL
ALL PRICES APPROXIMATE. DETAILS AT VOGUE.COM.AU/WTB

Top: Scott dancing Stephen Baynes's *Swan Lake* in 2016. **Above**: With David Hallberg in *Coppélia*, 2016. **Below**: CHANEL top, $4,580, and ring, $1,940, from the Chanel boutiques. WOLFORD tights, $50. Her own bodysuit.

If ever there was a child destined for a career in ballet, it's Scott. "I've always loved the music, escaping into stories, even as a little girl I loved dressing up and being a character. It's been like heaven." She started ballet classes in Brisbane aged five, and soon began travelling to Melbourne to attend ballet summer schools. When Scott was 11, her family moved to Melbourne and she attended The Australian Ballet School's junior associate program alongside future onstage partner and dear friend Adam Bull; and later the National Theatre Ballet before being accepted into The Australian Ballet School full-time, and ultimately, the company itself.

She cites myriad career highlights: performing Murphy's *Swan Lake* at the Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris and the Lincoln Center in New York with Bull; her first performance of the fiendishly difficult role of Alice in Christopher Wheeldon's *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, and immersing herself in the complex role of Manon in the eponymous production. Beyond the stage there has been helicopter rides to Queensland's Whitehaven Beach, climbing the Great Wall of China – twice – and doing a photo shoot with Bull in front of the Hollywood sign in Los Angeles, captured by Lisa Tomasetti.

One unforgettable moment was being invited to partner David Hallberg, the American international ballet superstar. He had been off stage for two and a half years rehabilitating from a career-threatening ankle injury with the ballet company's acclaimed medical team and was preparing for his career comeback on the Melbourne stage dancing *Coppélia*.

Today, Hallberg is the company's artistic director. Recalling that fateful performance, he says: "Amber was calm and relaxed, something I needed at that stage after [so long] being off it. We've always had an easy rapport and friendship, so it was a given that she was the one to guide me through the return. Usually it is the man guiding the woman in classical ballet, but at that stage I felt it was Amber guiding me and easing me back."

Bull, who retired earlier this year, describes partnering Scott during his 20-year career as "like coming home". "I don't think many people get that chance, to find the person where everything just feels right. Amber was so beautifully humble and generous and kind and the moments we shared together [on stage] inspired us to keep pushing and building on the relationship we'd founded," says Bull. "We've lived a whole chunk of our childhood and adulthood together, going through life and babies and relationships, being a support through what can be a tough career."

Describing The Australian Ballet as Scott's life and family is true in more ways than one. It was through the company she met fellow principal artist Ty King-Wall, who became her husband in 2018. The couple was a regular and popular onstage couple in productions including *Giselle* and *The Sleeping Beauty*. "It's lovely partnering your husband in romantic ballets, you don't have to pretend at all," Scott says. The family juggled the touring demands of work and home life following the births of both daughters, before King-Wall retired last year to become artistic teacher of classical dance at the Australian Ballet School.

In person, Scott is as she appears on stage: gracious, warm and completely dedicated to her art form. "Amber is a real artist as well as a dancer," says David McAllister, who took over as artistic director the year Scott joined the company and was the one to cast her in the lead role of Odette in 2004 when she was still a junior. "She was amazing, extraordinary, always authentic and that's something very true to Amber, she loses herself in the role."

That authenticity extends beyond the stage. "She's incredibly aware of every other dancer on the stage and in the company,

JAMIE HEATH. KATE LONGLEY
ALL PRICES APPROXIMATE DETAILS AT VOGUE.COM.AU/WTB

CAMILLA AND MARC top, $450, and skirt, $450.

"It's that bittersweet part of ballet: artistically you get more mature but the body has a finite period of time. You can't do it forever"

not just herself. She's the one who remembers people's birthdays and writes cards when people do a good performance."

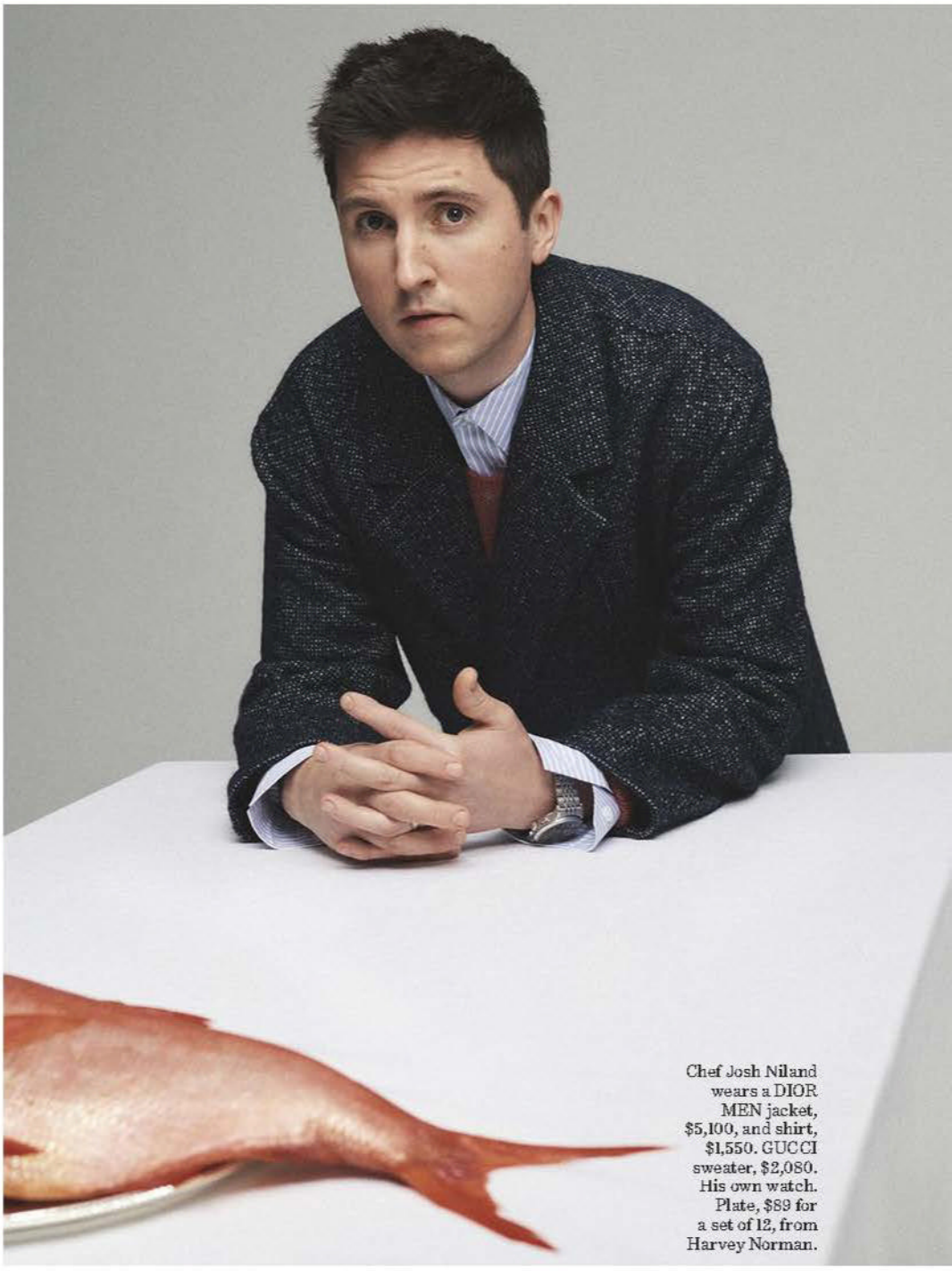
But after dedicating her life to audiences and the stage it's time to devote her energy to her own family. "Once I had Bonnie, I was enraptured; my girls are the reason I'm leaving, to spend more time with them," Scott says. "Physically I've reached a point where I feel happy, but it's that bittersweet part of ballet: artistically you get more mature but the body has a finite period of time. You can't do it forever."

Beyond the stage, there's plenty to look forward to. "It's the small things – being there for school pick-up every day, putting the girls to sleep, being in charge of my own schedule," she says. "And my body. I'm pretty grateful for how it's lasted, but if I roll my ankle or have a sore toe, I won't have to think how it's going to affect my work."

Ballet will still feature strongly in her life, as she plans to return to the coaching clinic she and King-Wall set up in Melbourne last year, Tailored Ballet Coaching, after she completed the Graduate Diploma of Elite Dance Instruction while on "safe duties" pregnant with Bonnie.

She knows her final performance – "grand final night, unfortunately" – will be all-consuming but also trusts her body to know what to do. "As a dancer your body has that emergency response, you have to hold it together, and *Swan Lake* is such a huge ballet I just have to physically get through the show.

"I don't want to overstay, I want to leave the party on a high. I love ballet and the career I've had and want to leave at the best point I can. And when it's on your terms, that's a real privilege." Swan Lake *is currently touring Adelaide, with Brisbane and Sydney to follow. For tickets, go to australianballet.com.au.*



Chef Josh Niland wears a DIOR MEN jacket, $5,100, and shirt, $1,550. GUCCI sweater, $2,080. His own watch. Plate, $89 for a set of 12, from Harvey Norman.

Big fish

His bright ideas about seafood have changed the way we eat, but when it comes to innovation, trailblazing chef Josh Niland is only just getting started. By Angelica Xidias.

Leaning over a table bearing a gleaming red fish known as an alfonsino, culinary mastermind Josh Niland stares intently down the lens of the *Vogue* Australia camera, appearing entirely in his element.

Once the photo shoot wraps, Niland packs the fish into a styrofoam box delivered directly from his very own seafood store, Sydney's Fish Butchery, a partner establishment to his award-winning Paddington restaurant Saint Peter. It's only now he shares that although he looked very much at ease on set, the studio proved an unfamiliar environment for him. But the set up? That was a familiar one for the chef.

"What makes me tick is standing in a room by myself, staring at fish and achieving an outcome that I didn't get last time," Niland says, a thoughtful expression colouring his boyish features. "Even this morning before I came here, I stood in the butchery, put a fish on the bench and stared at it."

For Niland, who is renowned for his innovation, observation proves the most effective catalyst for inspiration in the kitchen. "It sounds strange, but every time I go to cut a fish, I don't know exactly how it's going to end up," he admits. The final product, in Niland's hands, could be anything from a yellowfin tuna cheeseburger to his famed fish-eye ice-cream.

"I'll look at it and based on its size, shape and general dimensions, I'll make the decision as to how it'll end up being for you when you come and eat. It's a fairly abstract approach, and it's one that is contingent on being in the room," he continues. "But we're training people to think in a similar way."

At just 35, Niland has become the face of a philosophy known as whole fish cookery. Pioneering the fin-to-gill movement, the celebrated chef and Audi Australia ambassador has established a culinary empire made up of acclaimed restaurants and retail concepts. In 2020, he became the first Australian to win the prestigious James Beard award – sometimes referred to as the Oscars of food – for his debut tome, *The Whole Fish Cookbook*. His third book, *Fish Butchery*, was released in August.

STYLIST: HARRIET CRAWFORD. PHOTOGRAPH: JAMIE HEATH
HAIR: RORY RICE. MAKE-UP: NISHA VAN BERKEL
ALL PRICES APPROXIMATE. DETAILS AT VOGUE.COM.AU/WTB

But Niland's transformation of the way the world cooks, stores, ages and views fish was not born of a desire for global acclaim. Nor was it an effort to advance ethical and sustainable standards, although both proved by-products. Instead, his ingenuity was inspired by a sense of fear and financial factors.

"I received my first invoice for fish and it cost a fortune," the chef remembers of the moment he and his wife Julie opened Saint Peter in Sydney's Paddington in 2016. "And there's the chef part of your brain which is saying that half of what you've just purchased is going to go in the bin, because there's not a lot to do with everything else that comes from a fish. We were super-busy when we opened, so there wasn't the mindset to use the whole fish in the beginning."

Six months later, alarm bells rang as the restaurant's guest flow began to taper. "We weren't as full, which I think is the natural trajectory of most restaurants. But I had doubled the staff assuming we'd continue being busy, because I was exhausted and wasn't seeing my family. So the wage costs blew out, and the food costs remained unchanged."

Following a conversation with his accountant, Niland was forced to figure out how to streamline spending. "The way I approached it was by putting trays on top of garbage bins," he explains. "That meant we would start catching what we thought was waste and packing it away. Then, we'd pull it out and try to interpret what it looked like."

> "What makes me tick is standing in a room by myself, staring at fish and achieving an outcome that I didn't get last time"

Mastering how to make these unappealing parts of the fish delicious proved Niland's next challenge. "There were already ideas in my head around trying to interpret fish more like meat, but it became very literal. It was then looking at the world of meat butchery and trying to push that into the world of fish," says the chef. "By doing that, we started getting very expansive in our innovation. Economically, it became what made Saint Peter viable.

"There have been times we've had to reach out to different creatives to help bring reality to some parts of the fish, like working with a chap down in Victoria to make ceramics out of the bones and fat turned into candles and soaps. Not always does the by-product of a fish have to end up on the plate, it can actually be the plate," smiles Niland. "So that's kind of fun."

In the months that followed, the recognition Saint Peter received for its creative efforts cemented Niland's approach to whole-fish cookery. "That helped carve out the lane we saw ourselves in," he says. "Then we really leaned into that, and that's been the trajectory of the past seven years."

As Jeff Mannering, director of Audi Australia, explains: "Josh is nothing short of spectacular when it comes to challenging the status quo, creating new and inventive ways to minimise food wastage – without compromise. His dedication to sustainability and innovation in his field is synonymous with our approach to progress here at Audi, and we are always overjoyed to share a little bit of Josh's magic with like-minded Audi owners."

Those seven years have seen Niland and his wife expand their burgeoning culinary empire across Sydney, with two outposts of the Fish Butchery, as well as the wildly popular and more casual Charcoal Fish, and Petermen located north of the bridge in St Leonards. There's also been the release of his three books. Next, the power couple plan to open their first hotel in the summer of 2024. This location, which will take over Paddington's Grand National Hotel, will also rehouse a new and improved Saint Peter.

"We opened Petermen because there were delays with the Grand National Hotel," says Niland of an experience that proved something of a culinary boot camp and training ground. "We had the infrastructure, the people, the fish and the tenacity to do it," he adds. "I was nervous about going into the hotel with an underbaked group of people needing to execute something so grand. Learning how to be more than a chef made me very uncomfortable, but I'm glad we did it. We're putting a lot of effort into making it feel quite extraordinary, and it's almost there."

Each location serves as a reflection of Niland's own welcoming nature. "In our venues, I don't think you ever smell fish. You don't feel cold or have wet feet. Those things play into a nostalgic belief that a fish shop is the worst place in the world. So [I want] to create warmth and transparency. I need people to come in and feel as if they can see everything, that's why there are no walls."

Mannering affirms Niland's commitment to innovation across all aspects of his venues. "For those lucky enough to cross paths with Josh or dine at his table, this manifests in the clear reverence and care for each element of his dishes, as well as the transparency of both provenance and supplier throughout his menus," he says.

It's this attention to detail that drew Niland to working with fish as a young chef learning from Fish Face's Steve Hodges. Not – as one might think – because of a love of fishing. "I'm not a fisherman and I don't like fishing. That's on record," he laughs. In fact, the last time the chef found himself at sea was when he set out to capture an image for *Fish Butchery*. "I got made fun of because of how much I didn't want to be out there, and I was so physically unwell," he recalls. "Luckily, we caught the kingfish we needed and we've got a wonderful drone shot in the book."

Niland has come a long way from the chef who, by his own admission, refused to let anybody else cook for the first three years of Saint Peter. "That's not a good way to run a kitchen by any means, because it's restrictive and limiting and exhausting." Now Niland views his role as one of a mentor, something that allows him time with his family of four children. He's gone from "being the guy who cooks everything" to being more of a coach. "One that tries to get around to all of our venues throughout the week and hopefully mentor and give good advice," he sums up.

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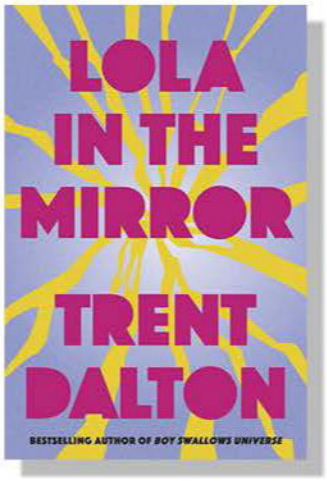
Story time

This month, lose yourself in a great read, from a starry romance to a mystery on the streets of Brisbane.

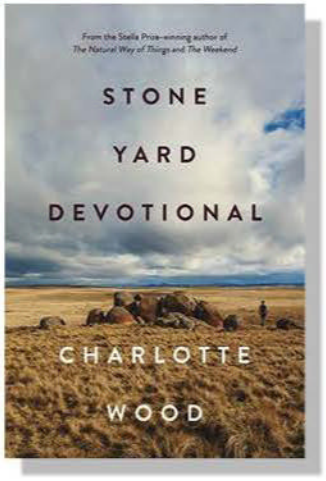
The Modern
(Scribner Australia, $32.99)
by Anna Kate Blair.

Sophia has her dream job at MoMA and is recently engaged, but her attraction to young artist Cara throws her sense of self into turmoil. A sparkling, wry debut from Melbourne-based author Anna Kate Blair set in New York's art gallery scene.



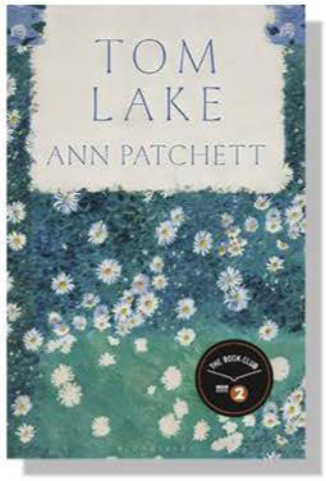
Lola in the Mirror
(4th Estate AU, $32.99)
by Trent Dalton.

Our master storyteller is back with his third novel about a mother and daughter on the run against the backdrop of the dark underbelly of Brisbane. Gritty, heartbreaking, funny, and moving – it's absolutely classic Trent Dalton.



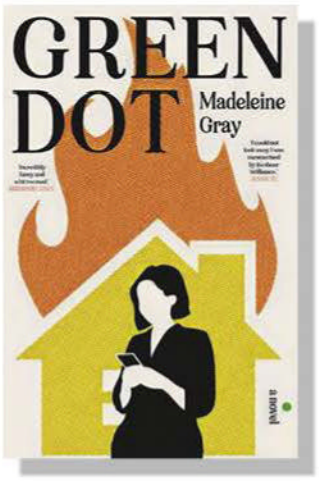
Stone Yard Devotional
(Allen & Unwin, $32.99)
by Charlotte Wood

Leaving her husband and city life behind, a woman seeks solace in the place she grew up, a small religious community in the outback. A tale of forgiveness and grief, Charlotte Wood's seventh novel is profoundly moving.



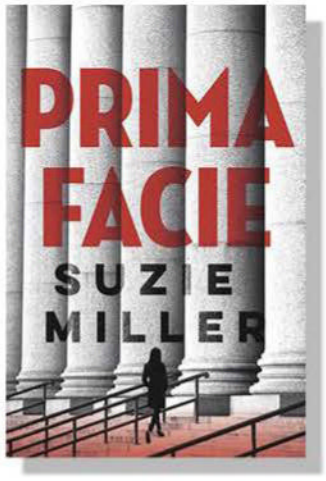
Tom Lake
(Bloomsbury, $32.99)
by Ann Patchett.

In a cherry orchard, a mother tells her three adult daughters about a past romance with a man who became a famous actor. Ann Patchett is one of the greatest storytellers and this book, about the act of telling stories, is exquisite.



Green Dot
(Allen & Unwin, $32.99)
by Madeleine Gray.

An aimless twentysomething working as a comment moderator at a newspaper, falls in love with an older journalist from her office in this biting and propulsive debut Australian novel – but this story doesn't end the way you think it will.



Prima Facie
(Allen & Unwin,$34.99)
by Suzie Miller

Based on the award-winning Australian play starring *Killing Eve*'s Jodie Comer, a brilliant young lawyer goes from defending men accused of sexual assault to fighting the legal system from the other side after she becomes a victim.

WORDS: HANNAH-ROSE YEE, CUSHLA CHAUHAN
ALL PRICES APPROXIMATE DETAILS AT VOGUE.COM.AU/WTB

PAMELA ANDERSON

PANDORA

LAB-GROWN DIAMONDS

I DO...
NOT FOLLOW THE RULES

DIAMONDS FOR ALL

PRECIOUS LEE

PANDORA

LAB-GROWN DIAMONDS

SAY YES... TO MYSELF

DIAMONDS FOR ALL

PANDORA

LAB-GROWN DIAMONDS

DIAMONDS ARE FOR~~EVER~~ EVERYONE

DIAMONDS FOR ALL

VOGUE AUSTRALIA

Shining on

Kylie Minogue wears a MIU MIU top, $2,270, briefs, $7,400, tights, $415, and shoes, $1,870.

ALIQUE
ALL PRICES APPROXIMATE DETAILS AT VOGUE.COM.AU/WTB

Come into her world

With a new album, the anthem of the year and a major Las Vegas residency, Australia's pop empress is as unstoppable as ever – and Kylie Minogue couldn't be happier. By Jonah Waterhouse.

Styled by Christine Centenera. Photographed by Alique.

SCHIAPARELLI top and skirt, both P.O.A. GUCCI tights, $530.
All prices approximate; details at Vogue.com.au/WTB.

This page: MARC JACOBS dress, $4,310. VAN CLEEF & ARPELS ring, $34,200. **Opposite page**: CHANEL swim top, $5,025, from the Chanel boutiques. CHANEL vintage sunglasses. LOUIS VUITTON ear cuff, $4,400.

It's one of the warmest days of the year in July during an unforgivable Los Angeles heatwave and Flamingo Estate, the elusive hilltop ranch that looks like a Tarantino film come to life, is buzzing. Everyone is awaiting a special, top-secret visitor. The giveaway is a *Rhythm of Love* vinyl, conspicuously propped against a mid-century teakwood sideboard, ready for its mistress – the 80-million-records-sold, chart-topping musical legend Kylie Minogue, who now counts a number-one album in five consecutive decades – to sashay through the doors.

Holding the exclusive Flamingo Estate for a full day is no mean feat – Margot Robbie was an exception when she popped by to shoot the cover of British *Vogue* in 2021 – but there's something extra special about playing host to Our Kylie. "It really just feels like an old friend is coming over," says Richard Christiansen, Flamingo Estate's owner. The entrepreneur worked on the star's Kiss Me Once tour as an art director eight years ago; for his home to serve as the backdrop to Kylie's seventh *Vogue* Australia cover is a full-circle moment. "Growing up in rural Australia, she was my entryway to the rest of the world and gave me permission to dream that I could leave the world I knew and dare to explore the rest. And dream big."

Once in situ, the superstar flits around the grounds in new season looks from Louis Vuitton, Chanel and Marc Jacobs, styled by editor-in-chief Christine Centenera. "Christine is adorable – adorable!" Minogue coos over the phone from her Melbourne home a week later, her speaking voice as warm and familiar as her singing one. "It was just such a delight to know I was shooting with *Vogue* Australia – an icon. I really hope it works out."

Though Minogue returned to our shores in 2021 after 30 years living in London, this momentary pause at home is only temporary, for life right now is crazy. "Even by my standards, I'm pretty go, go, go, but it's just … extra," she admits, a touch of exasperation noticeable in her otherwise excited tone. "I am just trying to put myself back together before the next bit."

Because the next phase is going to be major, even by Minogue's standards. She's about to release her 16th album *Tension*, anchored by the colossal hit "Padam Padam" (you hear it, and you know), which reached number eight on the UK charts and proved her cred with the TikTok generation. Then, she'll head Stateside, where she's putting the final touches on More Than Just a Residency, her tenure at The Venetian Resort Las Vegas. High demand for the run caused dates to expand to May 2024, totalling 20 riveting performances from the self-professed showgirl. Minogue reveals she'll draw on all parts of her catalogue for the set list as well as nod to past tours; perhaps the KylieFever2002 show with its robotic suits and bejewelled mini-skirts, or 2005's Showgirl: The Greatest Hits Tour with its corsets and fascinators. "It'll be a mixed bag," she remarks, with discernible glee. Vegas has never been cooler – Adele and Lady Gaga are Kylie's compatriots on the strip – and Minogue's "exploratory mission", as she describes it, into the world of residencies will unite fans from Europe, the US and Australia.

But any presumption that this is a retrospective exercise, or a harbinger of impending retirement, would be incorrect. "I would joke with my team, saying 'You're going to end up in Vegas one day,' meaning that's where your showgirl crown's going to be a bit dented and wonky, but your knees and hips will still be going, you can get yourself on stage," Minogue says wryly. "As in, that's the twilight of your career. What Vegas has become in the interim is very different." And while she might be 16 albums deep in a musical career that began in 1987, the release of *Tension* – a record stuffed full of "bangers", as she puts it – renders her as unstoppable as ever.

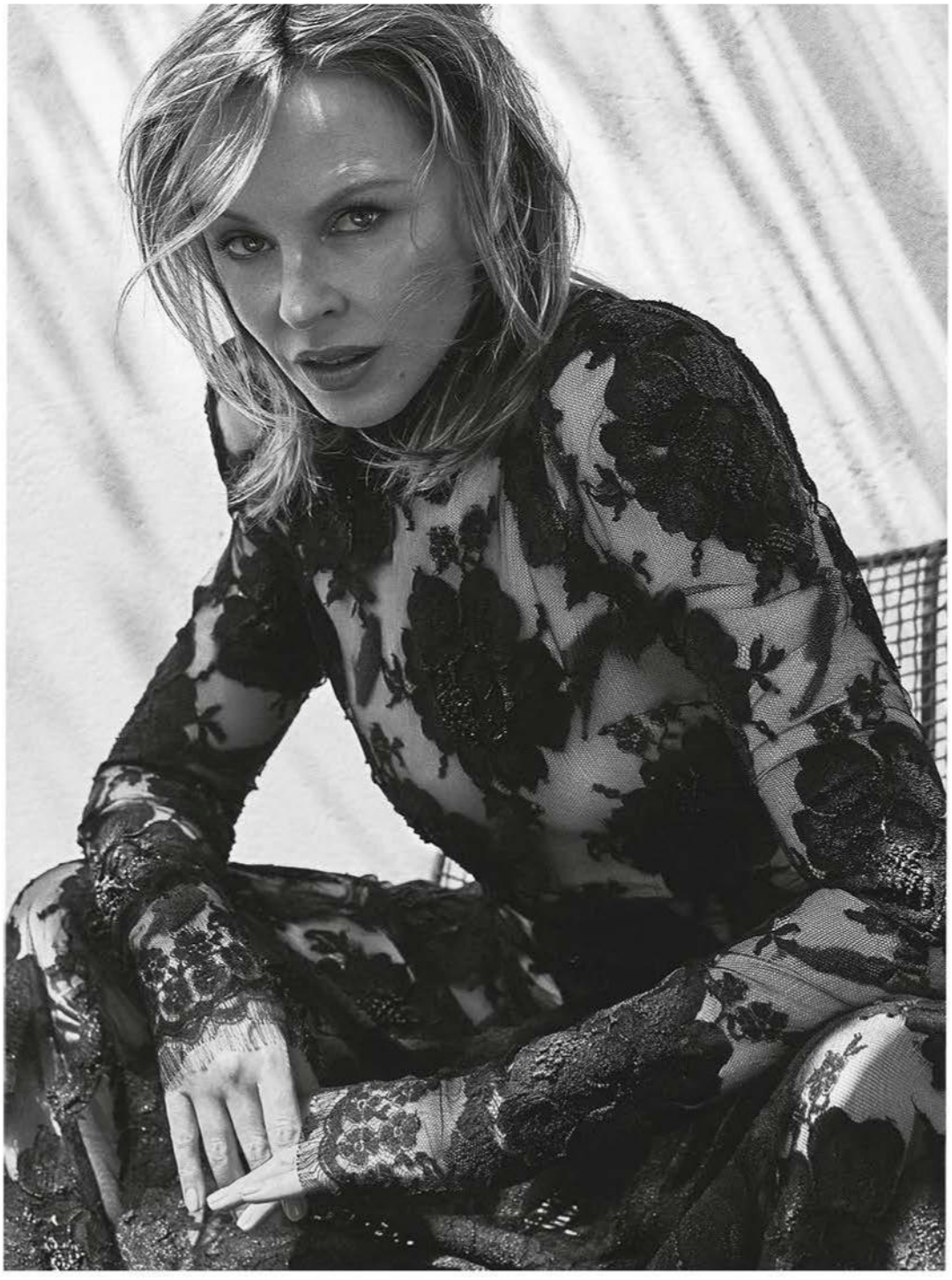
Still, she's the first to admit that the constant global movement demanded by the occupation of pop stardom isn't as easy as it once was. "I don't think I can attribute the lion's share of that to not being 25 anymore," she admits. But the exhaustion from finalising her Vegas show is only temporary, and Minogue has no intention of slowing, moving at the same speed and vigour as one of her many dance-floor paeans. "Now I feel like it's the mid-part, or maybe just past mid-part of my career," she affirms, "and it feels like a good time where I've got the energy and health and verve and excitement, and the audience to do it." →

"It would be great to move on from the 'she's lucky in love, she's unlucky in love', because it's just not that simple"

BALENCIAGA dress and bodysuit, both P.O.A.

ALIQUE

Opposite page: MIU MIU top, $2,270. BULGARI earrings, $12,600. **This page**: SAINT LAURENT jacket, $5,475, top, $2,145, and skirt, $2,295. CHANEL vintage sunglasses.



BALENCIAGA dress and bodysuit, both P.O.A.

If Kylie Minogue's career proves anything, it's that being yourself goes a long way. Since 1986, when *Neighbours* introduced her to the world as naïve tomboy Charlene, and the release of her first single "Locomotion" a year later, she's become one of the world's most beloved cultural icons. Her album sales total more than 80 million, and she received an Order of the British Empire in 2008, and was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia in 2019. Over time, the world has watched her grow up, find love, and even conquer illness with strength and tact; her imploring of women to check their breasts after her 2005 cancer diagnosis caused a major spike in mammogram appointments across Australia.

Through it all, her music has documented ups and downs, as life continues to become, in her words, "richer and more complicated". On *Tension*, she worked with writing and producing collaborator Richard 'Biff' Stannard for the third decade in a row, and she notes that these lifelong connections strengthen her output. "We share a lot of life between the two of us, so we come in with love and an understanding, and kind of talk in the same language," she notes, adding that compared to the 2000s, her work is "more reflective, or a little more to the heart of matters."

A lover of the "happy-sad" song, Minogue's lyrics often deliver salient points concealed by upbeat tunes. *Tension* puts her signature cathartic pop front and centre – like the title track, an instant club hit where she conveys tensity with a lover over a hypnotic beat – but the record isn't afraid to go deep. She reveals she rewrote the closing song "Story", about imploring a romantic partner to believe in themselves, "I don't even know how many times … right to the finish line," perhaps owing to its personal lyrics.

Songs that document love, lust and empowerment are familiar to Minogue, but she says with age comes the ability to speak on these topics with certainty. "There are songs [on *Tension*] that might feel more superficial, but I feel like I can sing them with more certainty than I may have in the early days, when I was 19, 20, 21, 25," she recalls. "I might've said I'm really reflecting on my reality then, but 30-something years down the line, comparatively, [the lyrics feel] a lot deeper."

Since those bubbly early hits – "I Should Be So Lucky", "Step Back in Time" and "Better the Devil You Know" – Minogue has proven herself outside the pop genre, nailing indie and country and duetting with alt crooner Nick Cave. *Tension* beckons listeners to dance; Minogue adds that its sound is a reaction to the rollout of her album *Disco*, a collection of nightclub anthems that, put simply, arrived in the wrong year for nightclubbing (2020). "I know *Disco* did really well and means so much to a lot of people because they tell me, which is incredible … But in one sense, it doesn't feel real because I didn't get to tour it!" she exclaims. "I didn't get to go out and stomp the stage and feel it through all my body."

Promoting *Tension* in a post-pandemic world, with the Vegas residency in the pipeline, allows her to do just that. "I wanted this album to be able to propel me to be performing again and be able to share the music with people and fans."

Minogue is close with her audience, but given the size of her stardom, she'd be forgiven for maintaining her privacy. The media's interest in her love life has been a constant throughout her whole career, and when asked if she has accepted that such probing may never go away, she pauses.

"I've often wondered if a lot of that started with the fact that I was 'Scott and Charlene' or 'Kylie and Jason'," Minogue begins, referring to the *Neighbours* on-screen romance that became a real relationship with co-star Jason Donovan. "Because it seems slightly disproportionate to me, or someone like Jennifer Aniston, where [public interest] is disproportionate to the other stuff you do.

"Yes, there's a level of acceptance that that's the way it is, and I think mostly it's driven by, we all love a bit of gossip. It's kind of like, what would've happened over the fence forever ago. But it would be great to move on from the 'she's lucky in love, she's unlucky in love', because it's just not that simple."

Though it can be tiresome, she clarifies that her weariness doesn't apply to fans who genuinely vie for her happiness. "When it's good, it's well-meant, good intentions," she says, and pauses again for a moment, before her voice pipes up. "But I'm happy where I am – I just will state that!" →

"Now I feel like it's the mid-part, or maybe just past mid-part of my career, and it feels like a good time where I've got the energy and health and verve and excitement, and the audience to do it"

All this points to a woman with resilience at her core, something that filmmaker Baz Luhrmann, and Minogue's close friend, says is what he admires most about her. "No matter what curveball is thrown at her, she is able to turn it around and reflect light back into the world, not only as an artist but on a human level as well," he offers.

Luhrmann shares a story from when they first met, while working on the January 1994 issue of *Vogue* Australia. Luhrmann, playing the role of guest editor for the issue, was directing a shoot with the legendary Bert Stern inspired by Judy Garland and Marilyn Monroe. "To get the scene right, even though it was a still image, I asked Kylie if she would sing just something," Luhrmann recalls. "Without even flinching, she went right into an a capella version of a song, bowling me and everyone else over with how pitch perfect and flawless she was. That kind of ability is truly rare, even among great pop icons."

Everybody has a Kylie story. For this writer, it was attending the KylieFever2002 tour at four years old with my dad (I still have the ticket stubs!) and watching her dominate in a spectacle that ranks among the best concerts I've ever attended ("Stop it! You were four?" she replies with a contented gasp). During my time as a fashion assistant, a friend and I were tasked with driving a French dancer to a photo shoot, and detoured across the Sydney Harbour Bridge, windows down and blasting "Love at First Sight" to give them a memorable first impression of Australia. For *Vogue* executive editor Jessica Montague, it was dancing to "Better the Devil You Know" for her first school talent quest. For many others, it was Kylie performing "On a Night Like This" at the closing ceremony of Sydney 2000 Olympic Games, or the memory of first being transfixed by the equally hypnotising "Confide in Me" or "Can't Get You Out of My Head" video clips. Kylie Minogue has soundtracked the lives of Australians, accompanying memories with a voice that's as distinct and enlivening as our sunlight.

Is she ever confronted by the largeness of this responsibility? "I don't find it confronting, I find it inspiring and moving and it makes a lot of what I do real," she muses. Still, she confides that as much as she loves her craft, pop stardom comes with personal sacrifices. "There's a cost for a lot of what I do, to myself. But hearing real, actual stories of people's lives, it's amazing!"

Minogue finds the number crunching involved in these stories – "that you were four, that someone else was 20, that someone else was 60" – somewhat confounding, but adds that there's "so much beauty" in the scope of the memories. "It's like a cosmic thing because you can't touch it, you can't bottle it. There's a magic, you're affecting someone, you're part of their memories and in their being. It's a truly wondrous thing and I'm so grateful."

Fashion designers are among those who've always fallen for Minogue's spark. Jean Paul Gaultier, Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana are close friends who've loaned their fashion expertise to creating looks for Minogue's concerts and film clips. In our cover shoot, Minogue looked so good in Miu Miu's sparkly undergarments – at the age of 55 – she could have worn them on the runway. The red catsuit from the "Padam Padam" music video came about after she attended Mugler's autumn/winter '22/'23 show in January and linked up with creative director (and super fan) Casey Cadwallader. "We got in conversation, and I said, this is a long shot – [the shoot] is in eight days' time – but could you manage a red catsuit?" she recalls breezily, in a way that makes you wonder who could say no. "He did and it was the star of the show! It arrived at 10.30 at night before the shoot day."

The elastane number joins other iconic Minogue music video garb, including those famous gold hot pants from "Spinning Around" or the Balenciaga dress from "Slow" (the significance of her wearing a partial blue Nicolas Ghesquière-designed mini for this month's cover is not lost.) As with everything else in her visuals, fashion plays a pivotal role in telling the story. "I get really into the details, certainly on all the graphics, everything I can get my hands on. I'll get completely forensic about it," she enthuses. If all had panned out differently, this fine-tooth comb approach would've served her well in another profession, and in her rare amounts of spare time, she's given it some thought. "If I had a different job from the beginning, it would've been a linguist … or a graphic designer," she says decisively. "Maybe I'll get to TAFE one of these days."

But for a woman who's done it all – and still hopes to do more – there are still things that can catch Minogue off guard. At one point I share that I've been listening to *Tension* – unreleased at the time of our interview, making me one of the first in the world to hear the hypnotic pop odyssey that ranks among her best work – on repeat all day. She laughs, and then sounds a little nervous; she hasn't yet spoken to a journalist who has heard it. "I'm so used to people not having heard [the new music] and talking theory, or my own experience … I got a little rush of nerves and excitement hearing you say that," she says. For Our Kylie, even with 16 album releases under her belt, millions of records sold and countless fans, making music is eternal.

Kylie's album Tension *is out now.*

ALIQUE

MIU MIU top, $2,270, briefs, $7,400, and tights, $415. BULGARI earrings, $12,600.

Hair: Teddy Charles
Make-up: Pati Dubroff
Manicure: Shigeko Taylor
Props: Brandon Clayton
Production: Willson Project
Shot on location at Flamingo Estate, LA

This page: BALMAIN top with gloves and corset, P.O.A., and pants, $2,920. BULGARI earrings, $16,450. **Opposite page:** H&M shirt, $119, and bag, $269. All prices approximate; details at Vogue.com.au/WTB.

Look closer

In understated hues, minimalism this season is crafted with unexpected details that speak volumes.

Styled by Ally Macrae. Photographed by Dario Catellani.

FABIANA FILIPPI
dress (with printed
version on top),
P.O.A. BULGARI
watch, $9,450.

COURRÈGES hoodie, $1,655. MAX MARA pants, P.O.A. Tank top, stylist's own.

DARIO CATELLANI

DESIGUAL FOR MAITREPIERRE jacket printed on paper, P.O.A.
ALEXANDER McQUEEN jumpsuit with heels, P.O.A.

SAINT LAURENT
jacket, $4,290,
skirt, $2,295,
and belt, $730.
BLUMARINE bra,
P.O.A. WOLFORD
bodysuit, $345.
SWAROVSKI
earring, $650.

DARIO CATELLANI

LORO PIANA
jacket, $11,775,
and top, $2,200.
CALZEDONIA socks,
$15. ANTONIO
MARRAS
shoes, $1,165.

DARIO CATELLANI

LOEWE top and
shoes, both P.O.A.
KITON skirt, $2,900.
CALZEDONIA
socks, $10.

BALENCIAGA jacket and skirt, both P.O.A. GIULIA MUNARI top, P.O.A.

DARIO CATELLANI

JW ANDERSON coat
and pants, both P.O.A.
MANGO top, P.O.A.

TAGLIATORE jacket,
P.O.A. VALENTINO shirt,
P.O.A. MANGO skirt, P.O.A.
VALENTINO GARAVANI tie,
$690. CALZEDONIA socks,
$10. 13 09 SR shoes, $750.

Hair: Paolo Soffiatti
Make-up: Vanessa Icareg
Manicure: Annarel Innocente
Model: Chu Wong
Props: Giulia Munari

DARIO CATELLANI

Self-portrait

Ahead of the first expansive survey of his work, esteemed portrait artist Vincent Namatjira reflects on a decade of satire and subversion. By Gladys Lai.

Vincent Namatjira takes three sugars with his coffee. "What?" he grins. "I like it sweet!" He says this less like a confession and more like a fact, with a frankness that makes me wonder if we should all be glutting our flat whites with sugar, caffeine snobs be damned.

It's 9.30 in the morning, and we're standing by the entrance of Yavuz Gallery in Sydney's Surry Hills, which represents Namatjira internationally. Yavuz's program director, Alanna Irwin, welcomes us in, and speaks briefly about the current exhibition, Abdul Abdullah's *Magical Thinking*, which flanks us on all sides. Namatjira regards Abdullah's paintings with the concentration of a fanatic – tipped ever so slightly forward, both hands clasped behind his back, curious eyes half-shielded by the black brim of his Panama hat. Anyone wandering into the gallery would pick the Western Arrernte man as an artist from his posture alone.

This month, the 40-year-old's work – along with that of his great-grandfather, famed Western Aranda watercolourist Albert Namatjira – will be the subject of a highly anticipated survey titled *Vincent Namatjira: Australia in colour*, presented as part of the Art Gallery of South Australia's (AGSA) Tarnanthi Festival. The showcase is comprised of vibrant paintings that have established Namatjira as one of the country's greatest portraitists, from sardonic depictions of politicians and colonial figureheads on Country – *Displaced* (2011), *Captain Cook Looking* (2016), *The Royal Tour (Charles, Vincent and Elizabeth)* (2020) – to self-portraits and paintings of Indigenous changemakers including Eddie Mabo, Archie Roach and Gordon Bennett. *Stand strong for who you are* (2020), portraying himself alongside AFL player Adam Goodes, won Namatjira the Art Gallery of New South Wales's Archibald Prize in 2020. He was the first Indigenous artist to do so.

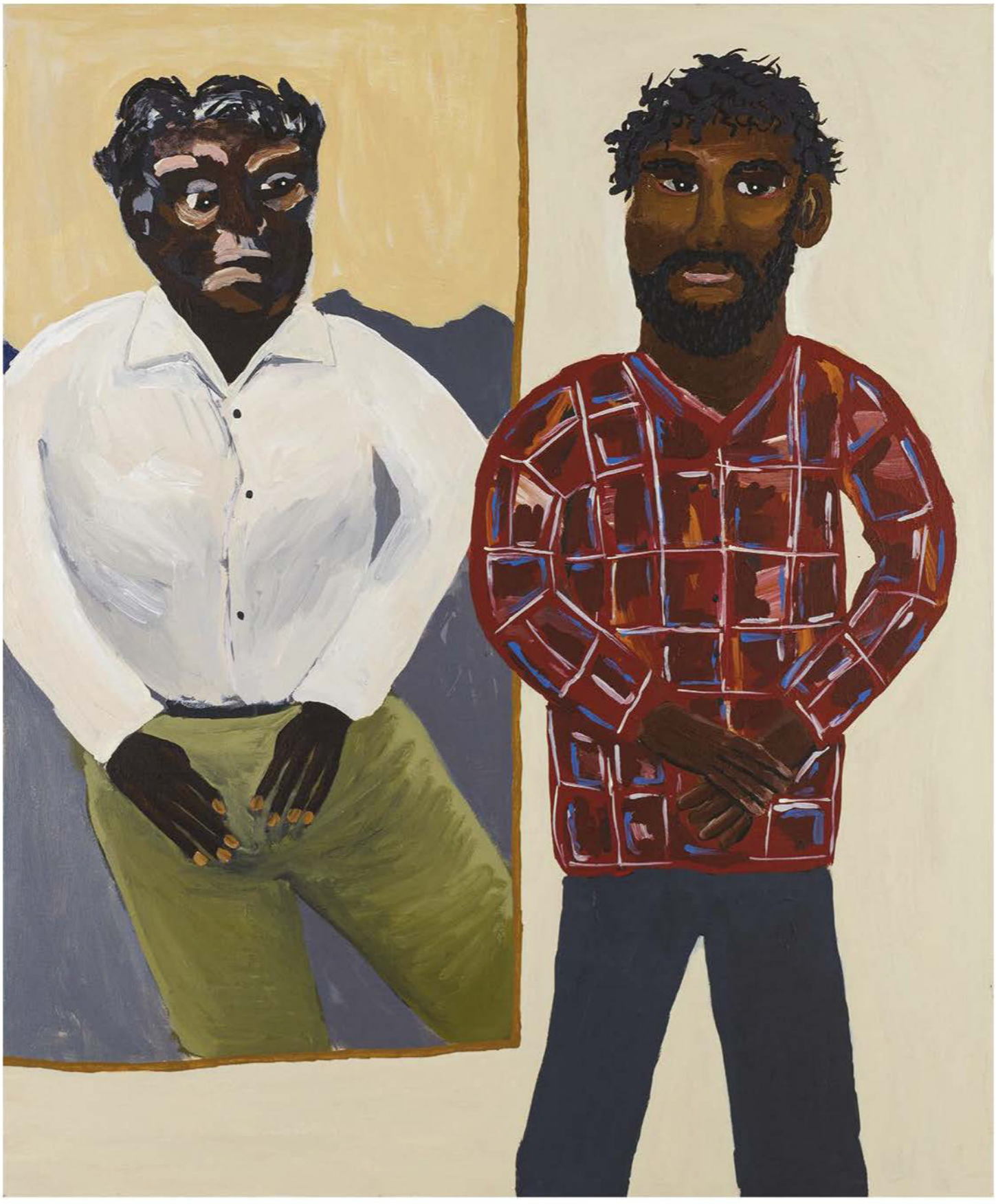
"It's been over 10 years since I started," Namatjira reflects, as we take a seat. He leans back in his chair, palms pressed to his knees, almost like he's balancing out the weight of a revelation. "I picked up a paintbrush for the first time in 2012. It changed my life." These days, the connection between Namatjira's →

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that this story contains images and names of deceased persons.

COURTESY OF VINCENT NAMATJIRA. TONY WANG. COURTESY OF FORT GANSEVOORT, NEW YORK

Elizabeth and Vincent (on Country) (2021).

AC/DC



Albert and Vincent (2014).

skill and that of his great-grandfather's is taken for granted. Painting is in his blood, of that Namatjira is emphatic. But there was a time, he recalls, when his heritage was obscured from him.

"I was taken away from my family when I was a young age, and put in foster care with my sister," Namatjira explains. "Growing up in the city, away from my Indigenous community, and with complete strangers instead, was hard. I had to pretend that no one else existed before I went back at 18 to reunite with my family. I didn't know I was related to Albert Namatjira. I didn't even meet the guy. But finding out that he was my great-grandfather, it was a real 'wow' moment. The Namatjira name is so well-known." The first image he ever made, a portrait of Albert, was a homecoming of sorts. "Painting with the same name feels like walking in his footsteps," says Namatjira. "Except I'm approaching it in my path, not his. I'm opening up the Namatjira name; I'm broadening the legacy."

And he is. For all the bonds between his art and his great-grandfather's, of lineage and colour and joy, when it comes to technique and conceptual approach, the two are worlds apart. Albert adored landscapes, and painted in a naturalist tradition. His subject was the many-faced Australian terrain: green slopes, gum trees, cliffs made blue from a distance. Vincent, meanwhile, paints Country from a different angle. You won't find serenity in his work, but sharp, electric wit. His subversive portraiture, which draws from cultural touchpoints including sport, imperialism and music, is shot through with poignancy and mischief.

Consider *Welcome to Indulkana* (2018), occupied by a careworn Donald Trump and a shirtless Vladimir Putin on horseback. In between them is Namatjira at the wheel of a green ute, with an Aboriginal flag in hand; Indulkana is the Aboriginal community in northern South Australia where Namatjira lives and paints, alongside fellow artists Kaylene Whiskey and Tiger Yaltangki. Or, perhaps, *The Royal Tour (Jubilee Balcony)* (2022), which sees Namatjira take his place alongside King Charles III, the late Queen Elizabeth II, and a screaming Prince Louis on the balcony at Buckingham Palace. In 2016, he created *The Richest*, a portrait series of the seven wealthiest Australians at the time, including Gina Rinehart, James Packer and Frank Lowy; the series of portraits *The Prime Ministers*, depicting the last seven prime ministers, was completed that same year.

"When I put something on a canvas, I want the world to see that this isn't a joke"

Namatjira sees portraiture as an equaliser. The brush is his levelling tool. When he paints a British royal or politician on Country, he strips them of their power by displacing them, cutting them out of their usual surroundings and pasting them onto the vermilion desert. "You see, I know what that feels like," Namatjira says, "feeling disconnected, out of place. There are so many barriers in Australia for us mob, so many barriers where there shouldn't be. We vote for someone we didn't grow up with, and that doesn't know us. We put a person in power that is a typical stranger to us mob. So when I paint someone with authority, or someone iconic, I'm trying to place them in my shoes. In my paintings, everyone's on the same page. Everyone is equal." →

COURTESY OF VINCENT NAMATJIRA, NATASHA HARTH. ROHAN THOMSON

Vincent Namatjira at Iwantja Arts, 2023.

The Indulkana Tigers (2014).

Of course, equality is double-edged. On the one hand, Namatjira brings authority figures down to earth; at the same time, he unearths figures from Indigenous history, and holds them to the light. "Painting Indigenous role models, like our athletes and land rights activists, is so important to what I want to produce for this country and the rest of the world," he shares. "A portrait is like a history record, but so many Indigenous figures have been forgotten. I want to put them in a place of acknowledgement, to bring them to the front."

Here, he references his series *Unknown Soldiers* (2020), inspired by Aboriginal men who served in World War I. "It was based on a trip I went on to Canberra," Namatjira remembers. "We went to the Australian War Museum. And they told us about all of these Aboriginal men who fought for their country and never returned home, because they weren't actually allowed to join the army. The young men who volunteered had to hide who they really were. There was this one man, William Punch, whose family was massacred, but he still joined the army. He died and was buried overseas." The final portraits, he continues, aren't based on specific likenesses. Rather, they're a pastiche of different individuals, collated from anecdotes and archival photographs. In painting Aboriginal soldiers, Namatjira hopes he can memorialise them in the way they've always deserved. "I want to make them a part of Australian history, for all time."

There's something else that Namatjira would like to clear up. His paintings, as wry and incisive as they are, might make you laugh, but they're not comedic fodder. "When I put something on a canvas, I want the world to see that this isn't a joke," he states. "This is what's happening. Culture, land, tradition." Humour isn't the end goal, it's the Trojan Horse. An image of Namatjira sharing witchetty grubs with Queen Elizabeth, or putting his arms around a then-Prince Charles and a boomerang-wielding Diana, isn't a punchline. In seeming playful, you're less defensive. You let down your guard. And *then* the truth of the portrait confronts you: the ugliness of Australia's colonial past and its present. In that, Namatjira hopes, the painting contributes to a better future.

Namatjira flashes a smile at the suggestion his humour is an instrument – no, scratch that, a weapon. "Absolutely," he says. "Painting a canvas is like tackling a battlefield or something." I ask him how he deals with opposition to his work, given its political content, and am rewarded with another cheeky beam. "I've been to Canberra," he quips. "I've met politicians. Some good fellows. And I received a Medal of the Order of Australia. But you know, you hear rumours about yourself. Sometimes, when I walk into a gallery or a room, I'll see people whispering to each other and pointing at me." How does he react? Namatjira gives another shrug, another smile. "Oh," he says coyly, "I just go with the flow."

Namatjira has far greater things on his mind. From exhibitions in New York – "Everything there is big. The clothes are big, the food is big. But the Statue of Liberty is just this small green person. It's so weird" – to impending artistic trips to Florence. ("I'm going to drink so much Peroni.") He's the father of daughters, three young adult women who keep him on his toes. "They're wonderful, but I have to keep an eye on them," he groans. "They're trying to get me on TikTok and Facebook and all that."

Talk of Namatjira's 40th birthday in June, which he celebrated with beers and a single chocolate cupcake, brings conversation back down to a simmer. "I just want to be a role model," he muses. "Every year, I'm trying to be a better person than who I was the year before. Because I wasn't trying to be an artist you know, at the start. But art has been with me ever since I was born."

What, then, would he tell his younger self – say, the man he was before he picked up a brush? Namatjira doesn't miss a beat. "Congratulations, Vincent," he says. "You're a legend."

Vincent Namatjira: Australia in colour *opens at AGSA from October 20 before moving to the National Gallery of Australia.*

Above: *The Royal Tour (The Balcony)* (2021). **Below**: *Self-portrait with Dingo* (2022).

COURTESY OF ART GALLERY OF NEW SOUTH WALES AND VINCENT NAMATA JIRA

Eternal sunshine

Unsurpassed as what might be the most successful brand in Australian fashion history, Zimmermann has distilled sun-drenched ease into an unstoppable global label. As many try to unpick their magic formula, they ignore the noise and look ahead – to Paris and an even brighter future. By Alice Birrell.

Styled by Kaila Matthews. Photographed by Jake Terrey.

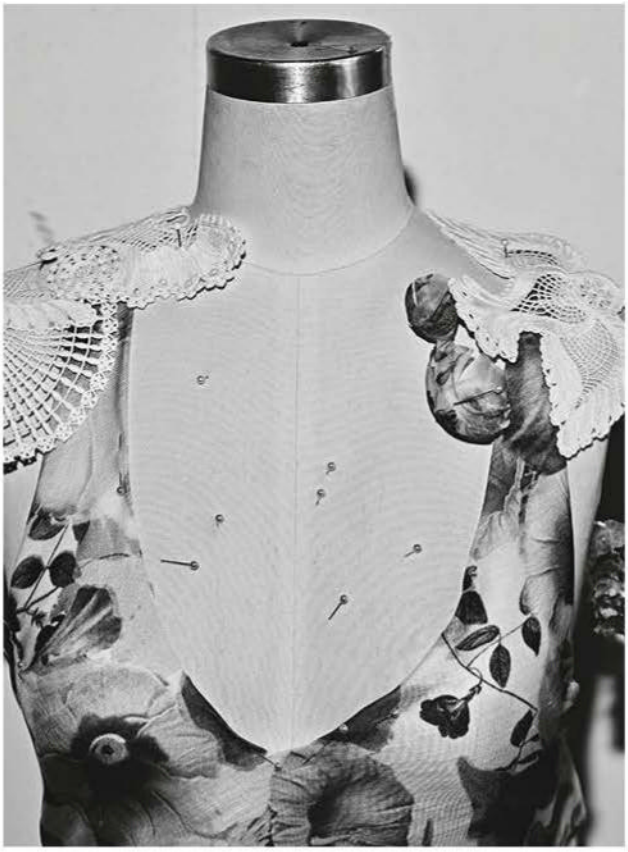
This page: ZIMMERMANN top, $495, and skirt, $1,750. **Opposite page**: Simone (left) and Nicky Zimmermann.

HAIR: SOPHIE ROBERTS. MAKE-UP: ISABELLA SCHIMID. MODEL: VITORINNI
ALL PRICES APPROXIMATE. DETAILS AT VOGUE.COM.AU/WTB

Simone Zimmermann is imagining a time tunnel. It goes from Sydney, where we are in a sun-drenched office, light bathing an emerald Tom Polo making its electric brushstrokes dance, to Paris. Beside her, sister Nicky Zimmermann nods along, both sets of the siblings' clear blue eyes flashing. Transcending time and geography is no big leap for the duo behind one of the biggest success stories in Australian fashion. It is in the French capital that a final expansion and relocation of a third headquarters is happening, the other being New York, as they prepare for their third showing at Paris fashion week, in September. It is part of a momentous phase in the brands three-decade-strong history that will be capped, next month, with a second Paris store, opening on the legendary rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré, where they will call the likes of Hermès, Chanel and Saint Laurent neighbours.

Of course, this fashion wormhole is theoretical, but in practice it is Nicky, the design brains, spiriting the collection "99 per cent finished" to Paris via a well-orchestrated apparatus of pan-continental fashion design. Flying out after seeing her daughter graduate from high school, she will join a handful of the design team who at present work in the studio across the road. They will join a Paris contingent in what is a mirror image of her creative space back home, down to the boards bearing the season's fabrics and the line-up of looks on paper figures. Fitting videos will be beamed back here to Rosebery, Sydney, as final adjustments are made. The idea, as Simone explains, is a fluid back and forth. "The whole foundation of being located in Australia means that we are really used to doing things remotely," she says.

To put it in context, few Australian fashion labels work this way. With a staff of around 900 and more than 580 stockists worldwide, Zimmermann is expanding at a solid pace. It had 22 stores in →



This page: Looks in progress in Nicky Zimmermann's Sydney design studio.
Opposite page: ZIMMERMANN top, $550, skirt, $1,500, and ear cuff, $450.

JAKE TERREY

2016, 38 in 2019, and barely four years later (which contained a global pandemic), it numbers 59 with four more to open by the end of the year around the world. Then there's the small matter of the serious investment from venture capitalist firm Advent International which has taken a majority stake, as commentators value the brand at amounts never before reached by an Australian fashion label. The sisters are unequivocal, however: their success was not driven in pursuit of these figures and never has been.

"I went to design school and was like, 'Well, I'm just going to make some things and sell them,'" says Nicky, who is dressed in a sharply lapelled rust-coloured suit, dark hair scraped back into a ponytail. "I was very immature and had no worldly experience at all. It was probably the same intention I had as a young kid; if I'm lucky enough to be able to sell something, maybe I'll get a store, and I'll work out the back making, and sell out the front. That was the plan, in complete seriousness."

From anyone else this could come across as insincere, but from the Zimmermanns, who are unreservedly Australian with an endless capacity for laughter and zero appetite for pretence (Nicky notes Parisians have thus far been bemused by her lack of self-seriousness), not so. For some years she stuck to that plan but then famously, the best laid plans tend to evolve.

In the beginning, Nicky was hand-embroidering western-style shirts in her parents' garage in the Shire in southern Sydney. It's widely told that she began selling clothing at Paddington markets in the early 90s. It was a request from *Vogue* Australia in 1991 that propelled things into a different kind of territory. Back then, press rails of ready-made samples didn't exist locally, and often, as then fashion editor Judith Cooke recalls, clothes were sewn for a shoot working with the designers to create something unique to suit the location – be it New Orleans or Morocco. Looks that telegraphed individuality were prized. "It was having something no one else had. It was, 'Where did you get that?'" says Cooke. Like intern Valeryi Yong's appliquéd blouse by a young Nicky Zimmermann that Cooke spotted, subsequently becoming their first piece in *Vogue*.

That early work – dresses with lace, embroidery and mixed fabric – reminded Cooke of the kind of 70s appliqué pieces found in London's Kensington Market. "Nicky had a great sense of colour. I think it was that vintage feel and the value of something vintage, something that's one-off," she says of what stood out. It wasn't long before wholesale stockists followed, and then Simone who joined to lead business operations, as she does today as chief operating officer alongside Nicky's husband, Chris Olliver, as CEO.

But Simone, living overseas at the time pursuing marketing, controverts a part of the story. "It was funny for me. I was watching you doing all of this, starting by yourself and while you say you were unworldly, you had a very straightforward sense of logic of how to make it happen," she says pondering Nicky across the table who, back then, began managing stock levels, monitoring what was sold at Zimmermann's first store in Darlinghurst, opened in 1993. "There's a canniness; there's an instinct that you have."

When the sisters joined forces, they supported each other's gut feelings. Like adding swim, also not in the original plan. Now synonymous with Zimmermann, swimwear wasn't a part of the label until five years in, for their first fashion week in Sydney in 1996. "The swimwear was just absolutely stand-out, world class," recalls Cooke of first seeing it.

"I knew a bit how to make swim and it was quite easy; you just need an overlocker and some rubber, and I knew how to cut a pattern, and away you go," says Nicky, characteristically casually. "It was a decision Simone and I would've made probably over a glass of wine before doing the show. We wanted to show something that could be relevant to overseas buyers," she remembers.

It also clicked from a strategic standpoint, explains Simone. "Your thought was, 'How are they going to take a fashion brand from Australia seriously?' But, if we can do something that relates to Australia – that makes sense to them from a fashion point of view – then it was a better story. And it really sort of worked."

Fashion journalist Elsa Klensch featured them on her weekly CNN style segment and soon the brand was stocked in Saks Fifth Avenue, Harvey Nichols and Net-a-Porter, which began offering the label in 2016. Current buying director Kate Benson says, despite its associations with resortwear, as early stockists they recognised that Zimmermann's craftsmanship could take it beyond holiday dressing. "They have evolved so far beyond [resort]," she notes of how it now transcends seasons. "The customer styles the brand in different ways throughout the year, making it seasonally relevant, individual and versatile."

Their design vocabulary, which embraces centrepiece volume, flounces and details in turn does not place undue demands on →

"There's a certain optimism to what we do. For me, fashion is fun, and I think that people can feel that coming through"

the wearer to heavily style pieces. This found fans globally. Each go part way in explaining how, although there was no "world-conquering plan", as Simone puts it, they achieved feats only those with a true proclivity for innovation, and foresight, can execute.

Like disrupting the resortwear category, being key players in its revival. When they first sold in the US in the 90s and early 2000s, explains Nicky, "It was all Calvin Klein and nobody was allowed to be different." They insisted their swim hang in stores alongside their clothing, furbelows and all, antithetical to a regimental department hidebound by old ideas: they were doing holistic merchandising before they knew what it was. "I guess we didn't really understand how important that was. It was just, for whatever reason, important to us," says Nicky. That instinct again.

As they grew, they switched to Northern Hemisphere seasons, starting a decade-long stint at New York fashion week in 2013. Fast forward a few years and soon celebrities discovered their innately feminine summer mien, from appearances on *Sex and the City* to Rihanna and Beyoncé, who would go to their store herself in LA. It didn't hurt that a boom in air travel coincided with the explosion of visually driven social media including Instagram. Clothing made for a good time became social currency like never before.

But with increased success came increased pressure. Untethered from the relative bubble of Australia, people wanted to shape them, an inevitable experience for a growing brand, telling them what not to do. "[Back then] it would be colour and print," says Nicky laughing at the memory. "Now they say, 'Can you do more print?' And I say, 'No.'"

For Nicky, who can be planning three collections at a time, gut feelings continue to guide her collections and, as the growth continues, is a steadying centrifugal force. That governs all else – stores in Asia, the Middle East, Italy, next Monte Carlo, the events they throw to mark these, previous investment from Italian firm Style Capital in 2020, and categories they've added from jewellery to eyewear. "I like to have a connection and then I like to be able to get my team feeling the same connection," she says of the creative flashpoint. "Quite often the connection feels very natural if it has something to do with Australia."

Over time, she's tapped inspiration from her home country from the well-known to the arcane, from botanical painter Ellis Rowan, the defunct Australian soap *Number 96* that ran for five years in the 70s, and a former roller-coaster stretching across Tamarama Beach that their grandmother told stories of. "It means something. Every print, every single reason why we do a sleeve, it's coming from something. No one else might notice."

For resort '24, she tapped Australian dance halls of the 50s. Necklines in jet black, and fairy-floss pink in silk taffeta mimicked cat-eye sunglasses. A tiered bubble-hem skirt doesn't read misty-eyed but charmingly nostalgic. "There's a certain optimism to what we do. For me, fashion is fun, and I think that people can feel that coming through," says Nicky. "It's really important to me that it's really relatable. Not necessarily practical … For me, if I'm going out for dinner – and my husband will laugh at me all the time – I go to get dressed up and it might be it's just because it's fun and it makes you feel better. I think that is the essence of what we do."

"[Nicky has] a joyous, flirtatious relationship to fashion," says Cooke who noticed this from the outset. "She has that personality and it transpires in her designs. What she had was unique because a lot of people were full of self-doubt. She just had a positive, energetic, ambitious idea of their potential."

They face their biggest moments with this optimism. Like during the pandemic, they say of one of their biggest tests. They had to set up their own covid testing unit, separate sewing machines physically, and staff would ferry the collection samples in progress between their houses.

"The cutters would cut from home, someone would pick it up and drive it from here to there, leave it there, and not talk to them," says Nicky making a cross with her arms. Their team in New York somehow worked out how to sell a collection, working remotely with the team in Australia. "This is what happens when you have long-term relationships with people and it's a bit more than work," says Nicky. "That's people. That's not just a system," says Simone.

Another milestone is entering unchartered territory with the scale of their success. They're determined to preserve the core ways of working, adamant the values that have carried them this far won't change. "It's just not possible, to be honest. It's so much a part of our lives and what we do," says Nicky resolutely. "We didn't do this to lead us to doing something else. This is what we do." Says Simone: "Yes, it's a bigger business but … it hasn't fundamentally changed."

Showing in Paris, the apogee of an aspiring fashion designer's dream in 80s Sydney, they must have been ready after all this time? "It was probably the most nervous I've ever been in 30 years," laughs Simone. "Not because I didn't think we were going to do it well – it was just because of where it was." For Nicky, she stayed focused on the present, finessing fit, fine-tuning embellishment. "It kind of helps you when you're doing a show to remain calm; it's sort of just business as usual."

But just sometimes they allow themselves a moment of reflection. "I'll elbow Nicky and go, 'Shit! We're about to show in Paris!'" she says. "Or think: how fun is that? To be able to do this with your sister, your family or your friends."

Not for too long though. The day before the first show, they went on a morning walk together. "Nicky hadn't even seen the Petit Palais before we were in Paris," laughs Simone of the show venue. "I said, 'Do you know this is where the show is?'" Nicky interjects. "I'm like, 'Okay. Oh god. Okay, great. Let's just keep doing our exercise.'" ■

ZIMMERMANN jacket, $1,350, top, $850, shorts, $550, and ear cuff, $450.

JAKE TERREY
ALL PRICES APPROXIMATE DETAILS AT VOGUE.COM.AU/WTB

CYNTHIA MACHAVA
19, Johannesburg, South Africa

"I thought I was daydreaming when I found out I was chosen as a semifinalist. I felt so blessed and overjoyed. I always wanted and prayed to be a part of something great in the modelling industry, but I never knew I would shoot for *Vogue*!"

Opposite page: Rayan (left) wears a GUCCI dress, $12,000. FIFI CHACHNIL briefs P.O.A. NOOR FARES earrings, P.O.A., and ring, $6,959. SCHIAPARELLI boots, P.O.A. Mars wears a GUCCI dress, $22,000. MIZUKI earrings, P.O.A. NOOR FARES ring, P.O.A. SCHIAPARELLI boots, P.O.A. **This page**: Cynthia wears a VERSACE dress, P.O.A. ARA VARTANIAN earrings and ring, on right hand, both P.O.A. On left hand: NOOR FARES ring, P.O.A. All prices approximate; details at Vogue.com.au/WTB.

New cast

In 2023, *Vogue* embarked on a mission to find exciting new modelling talent from around the world and to spotlight true individuality. Meet the faces of the future.

Styled by Poppy Kain. Photographed by Charlotte Wales.

MENGYAO WANG
20, Henan, China

"I like being on stage and in front of the camera. When I was still in college, I took part in a show with the encouragement of my friends. From then on, I fell in love with the feeling of performing and decided I wanted to be a model."

ALAÏA coat, $5,420. NOOR FARES earrings, P.O.A.

RANIA BENCHEGRA
28, Marrakech, Morocco

"As a Moroccan model, my decision to enter the world of fashion wasn't just about fulfilling a dream, it was a fierce determination to inspire and represent Arab women, shatter stereotypes and empower us to embrace our identities unapologetically."

TOM FORD dress and belt, both P.O.A. MIZUKI earrings, P.O.A. MIU MIU shoes, $1,870.

CHARLOTTE WALES

COLETTE KANZA 28, Paris, France

"I've never looked at my email as much as I did after I submitted my pictures – my favourite app these past months was Mail. What's it like to be on a *Vogue* set? I just let myself be in the moment; R&B and Afro music in the background always brings positive vibes."

ALEXANDER McQUEEN dress, $7,860. ARA VARTANIAN earrings, P.O.A. DOLCE & GABBANA shoes, $1,200.

CHARLOTTE WALES

RAYAN EL-MAHMOUD
19, Accra, Ghana

"My ultimate goal is to be a positive role model, inspiring others to believe in their dreams and to realise that, with ambition and hard work, anything is attainable. Despite facing challenges in a country where the modelling industry is not as prominent or structured, I remained steadfast in my pursuit."

MAISON MARGIELA bodysuit and skirt, both P.O.A. NOOR FARES earrings, P.O.A., and ring, on right hand, $6,959. On left hand: HERMÈS ring, P.O.A. GIVENCHY shoes, P.O.A.

DULMI
25, Tokyo, Japan
"I want to convey to the world that I love myself as I am and want to change the global beauty standard in a healthy way. After the shoot, I had dinner with some of the models staying at the same hotel. I was supposed to be jet-lagged, but I had too much adrenaline from the fun of shooting and was up until late."

BOTTEGA VENETA coat, $13,740. NOOR FARES earrings, P.O.A.

ABRAR
21, London, England

"There were so many people on set with different roles, from nail stylists to choreographers. It made me realise that the images we see in *Vogue* don't fully convey the amount of work and time that goes on behind the scenes, and it gave me a new-found appreciation for the whole process."

BALENCIAGA top and skirt, both P.O.A. ARA VARTANIAN earrings, P.O.A. GIANVITO ROSSI boots, $2,100. Headscarf, model's own.

CHARLOTTE WALES

MARS
23, Los Angeles, United States

"I recently graduated with a degree in psychology and women, feminist and queer studies. In the future, I hope to continue modelling, as well as pursue a master's degree in social work and take my licensing exams to become an LCSW [licensed clinical social worker] and then go on to become a counsellor or therapist."

MARC JACOBS dress, $3,480. MIZUKI earrings, both sets P.O.A. ARA VARTANIAN ring, P.O.A.

CHARLOTTE WALES

Rania (left) wears a DOLCE & GABBANA jersey and dress, both P.O.A. NOOR FARES earrings, P.O.A. Cynthia wears a SAINT LAURENT jacket, $8,990, top, $1,155, skirt, $4,980, and belt, $695. REPOSSI bracelet, $32,779.

Hair: Shingo Shibata
Make-up: Kanako Takase
Manicure: Sasha Goddard
Movement director: Eric Christison
Set design: Alice Kirkpatrick
Production: Mini Title

Rage against the machine

As AI gathers pace, so too does the indignation about how it may affect our lives – a key topic at this year's *Vogue* Codes. With 2024 shaping up to be a transition point for technology, *Vogue*'s AI expert Nikki Chowdhury unravels it from a perspective of potential rather than panic, and argues that optimism is needed.

It's been difficult to feel at peace with the speed at which artificial intelligence is evolving. In just the span of a decade, concepts like robot lovers (android devices designed to form romantic relationships with humans, and vice versa) have veered from humorous to outrageous to unnerving.

It's no surprise, then, when searching for a soothing balm for it all, I recently found myself fiending for a 1990s rom-com.

As if by chance, Netflix queued the trailer for *You've Got Mail*. Despite the film debuting 25 years ago, this attempt at escaping the quickly emerging future and all the anxieties that come with it, was futile. There was something strikingly familiar in the anxious conversations happening between Meg Ryan's Kathleen and her brooding, journalist boyfriend. He was complaining about computers and email, lamenting the end of Western civilisation. Kathleen agrees with him, but only until he leaves their apartment when she reaches for her keyboard and begins messaging a stranger in a chatroom.

You can track public perception of AI mostly through sci-fi classics, where it has remained a focal point for just over a century, first referenced in Karel Čapek's 1920 film *R.U.R.* (*Rossum's Universal Robots*). The social climate in the early 2010s was one of general enthusiasm when it came to AI. Global success of films such as *The Matrix* contributed to a feeling of widespread excitement, with a prevailing belief in its role as an innovation-driven economic catalyst. Bolstered by a booming Silicon Valley startup culture and popularised further by well-liked thought leaders of the time like Elon Musk, mantras such as "move fast and break things" felt exciting, experimental and disruptive – in a good way. The rise of iPhones meant the permeation of AI into consumer products, shortly followed by the debuts of virtual assistants Siri and Alexa, making artificial intelligence more accessible and familiar to the masses, fostering rapid public adoption.

But the "techlash" had been a long time coming. By the late 2010s, principles like "move fast and break things" came under greater scrutiny, as tech giants and political bodies became more intertwined. Fears around how much we were being surveilled by the devices we had become so dependent on were mounting. Concerns about privacy, data and bias intensified, with major incidents like 2013's NSA spying controversy and the 2018 Cambridge Analytica scandal adding fuel to fire. Covid accelerated tech and AI's adoption in healthcare, a move some viewed with apprehension. High-profile cases of AI discrimination, where systems are designed with the unconscious biases of their human creators, resulted in calls for transparency and fairness behind decision-making systems from citizens – just this past August, the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission settled its first-ever AI-hiring discrimination case.

Recent pop culture references have also been decidedly bleak. Shows like *Westworld* portrayed darker eventualities, indicative of a paradigm shift. Somewhere between *The Jetsons* and *Black Mirror*, public opinion went from hope to fear.

THE END IS NIGH – OR IS IT?

In May of this year, Sam Altman of OpenAI (the company behind ChatGPT) and Demis Hassabis, chief executive of Google DeepMind, signed an open letter saying AI posed a "risk of extinction" to the human race, urging government entities for stronger regulation. The quote was picked up by multiple media channels, and it made for chilling headlines. The topic was a major focus during recent strikes by the Writers Guild of America, and elicits strong reactions from industry leaders.

The letter itself asked regulators for a six-month hiatus on the development of the largest AI models, and other prominent researchers in the field, including Geoffrey Hinton and Yoshua Bengio – who won the Turing Award for their work on neural networks – signed the statement. Sceptics called the move an attempt at stifling competition in a quickly developing industry, and many burgeoning AI startups didn't sign.

Why are apocalyptic narratives about AI so compelling? From Mayan times to contemporary doomsday preppers, extinction events have long captivated us. We are drawn to these outcomes in a way that feels almost primal. The most prevalent argument against AI has been made against technology and science for time immemorial – "don't mess with Mother Nature". To put it simply, we are well-primed to fear what we don't understand.

AI speed bumps feed into our negativity bias, rendering problematic incidents more persuasive. Fear is addictive, and when our survival instincts kick in, our species is prone to catastrophisation. But maybe it's simpler than that. Most of the scenarios we've envisioned for AI have their base in popular culture, so perhaps this is what we are capable of imagining.

The fear is not unfounded. Advancements in artificial intelligence have the capacity to redefine the boundaries of human involvement in endless domains, and fashion is one of them. The very existence of generative AI (a branch of machine learning designed to create original and creative content) poses a threat to artists, creatives and a multitude of other professions, the extent of which remains elusive. AI's potential to automate the creation of art challenges the fundamental values of human creativity, and it's made even murkier when corporate profits are in mind.

But *You've Got Mail* reminded me we've been here before. It echoed many of the same sentiments shared in current discussions around AI. How technology can both connect and disconnect individuals, how technological progress threatens the upheaval of entire industries and the very real threat of job displacement. But also how prone we are to tunnel vision and apocalyptic thinking when the future seems uncertain – and how, despite a cacophony of doom and gloom, tech optimism finds a way.

A MEASURE OF INTELLIGENCE

Optimism is crucial to how we craft a future with AI. Discussions about the ethics of artificial intelligence dominated part of *Vogue* Codes this year. The theme, Change for →

STYLING: ZHAO HUI. PHOTOGRAPHS: MOMO CHEN "DREAM" ARCHITECT: DAYONG SUN

The images in this story have been created using digital technology interacting with artworks. They explore the relationship between cities and nature, humans and machines.

Generative AI could boost profits in the apparel, fashion and luxury sectors by US$150 billion conservatively

Good, gave our team the opportunity to explore its role in shaping the future through a different lens.

Long before we started planning, I was already curious about the topic. As *Vogue* Australia's digital audience lead, the subject was particularly prescient to my role, given the tool's potential to help with decision-making and data analysis. My job involves knowing as much about the future as possible – how audiences are adapting to it, how we can adapt to our audience – and the importance of the mantra "adapt or die".

Ted Chiang's *The New Yorker* essay, "ChatGPT is a blurry jpeg of the web" had caught my attention, answering as many questions as it inspired. It sparked an obsessive interest in the topic and all its moving parts. How did it all work and was it actually intelligent?

The answer is complicated. Artificial intelligence is powered by large language models, known as LLMs, which are essentially large amounts of raw text data. The systems that analyse this data are able to mimic intelligence and human speech, and are adept in processes like pattern recognition and data analysis. But it's a tool, not magic.

The nervous commentary around AI ignores one major fact: none of it is actually "intelligent". In its current format, AI is not capable of emotions, empathy, self-awareness or the ability to reason abstractly. It's prone to "hallucinations", where it simply makes things up – as two US lawyers recently found when crafting a defence for their client, an AI-powered chatbot cited cases that never actually happened. The more I understood the foundations of the tool and how it worked, the less scary it was.

While AI tools can craft a convincing college-level essay, it struggles with complex arithmetic. It seemed that the real danger with this technology was not that it's *too* intelligent, but that it's rather good at faking it; capable of giving answers that are *just* plausible enough that identifying falsehoods in them requires a subject matter expert. What is currently deemed "intelligence" is actually just high-level pattern recognition, and a more accurate description would be to call it "an approximation of intelligence".

But this also doesn't mean it won't change the world.

Much of the media coverage around AI focuses on the negatives, zeroing in on aspects like built-in bias and its role in autonomous systems. The technology, and regulation around it, is still improving. But at the 2023 *Vogue* Codes Summit, we wanted to tackle the topic from a place of curiosity and potential, not panic and assumption. Part of my role entails preparing *Vogue* Australia for the future, and not being afraid of it – and it felt premature to cast the topic aside with pessimism.

The *Vogue* Codes line-up for 2023 included various experts – a panel presented at UTS was dedicated to exploring "The World in 2030", and featured distinguished Professor Fang Chen, an award-winning leader in AI. Another speaker of note was CSIRO's Stela Solar, director of Australia's National AI Centre, whose role involves the positive adoption of AI in various fields. When speaking with Edwina McCann at our In Conversation Sydney breakfast, she addressed the question we all had on our minds: "Should we be afraid of AI?" Solar responded, "Well, fire was probably pretty scary the first time someone saw it."

AI'S PLACE IN FASHION

AI is set to continue dominating headlines and online amphitheatres in the coming years, and 2024 is geared to be a key transition point for the fashion industry as it begins to assist in all aspects of the supply chain.

Fashion's relationship with technology has long been ambivalent. There have been those who embrace the future, like Alexander McQueen, whose spring/summer '99 show famously had paint-spraying robots gunning down models in washes of neon, and Nicolas Ghesquière, who chose "Lightning", a digital model avatar forged in partnership with Square Enix (the Japanese gaming company behind Final Fantasy), to be the surprise star of Louis Vuitton's spring/summer '16 campaign.

Despite these revolutionaries, the industry was remarkably slow in adopting ecommerce and social media, citing fears around exclusivity, prestige and the immersive power of in-store experiences. It's imperative we don't make the same mistake twice. And businesses are taking note.

In August, IMG models signed a new "virtual client"– a CGI influencer named Zlu – seeking to establish a foothold in the emerging space. Vtubers (online entertainers who use virtual avatars generated using computer graphics) are the newest swathe of "influencers". The digitised avatars enable creators to freely express themselves, mitigating the privacy concerns and physical scrutiny typically associated with having a public persona.

McKinsey's forecast is substantial: it predicts that generative AI could boost profits in the apparel, fashion and luxury sectors by US$150 billion conservatively, and up to $270 billion over the next three to five years. It quantifies AI's role in shaping the industry's future, highlighting its significance not merely as a disruptive force, but as a creator of value.

And it's already begun. For young people entering the workforce, the fear of AI taking jobs before students even graduate is real. But for every door it closes, AI opens 10 more. New careers, focusing on the rollout, application and building of AI tools are already popping up. At Optus, newcomer Honré Young, who studied marketing and psychology at university, has forged a role that didn't exist five years ago. Her position, digital artificial intelligence product manager, involves leading a team in the build and rollout of Optus's virtual messaging assistant, which has helped customers in more than 15 million conversations. Almost one in three customers requiring service have their needs resolved end-to-end by the Optus Assistant. For agile digital natives entering the workforce, when it comes to AI, the world is their oyster.

"REFLECTOR" ARTIST: ATELIER ARI

For Young, a degree in psychology made her well placed to inform the rollout of AI products at Optus. "My study of psychology and human behaviour – understanding what consumers, or just people, want – was incredibly helpful in the context of AI," she says. Explaining further, Young describes how she acts as a conduit between the end user and the developers. "When you can actually understand how people want to use a product, or why they fear certain technologies, it allows you to go beyond the traditional engineering side of things and design products in a way that actually gets people to adopt new tech."

The engines that fuel AI could have various applications throughout the fashion industry, from trend forecasting to social welfare in supply chains. AI's pattern recognition abilities are capable of anticipating micro-shifts in consumer buying trends, allowing brands to quickly reallocate stock to garments that have future selling power. In a culture increasingly driven by newness, the reduction of overstock not only addresses fashion's waste problem, but can help designers predict the changing desires of their consumers faster, and more accurately, than ever.

Greater transparency within fashion's increasingly scrutinised supply chain will soon also be made possible. Altana, an AI-powered startup that recently struck a multi-year deal with US Customs and Border Protection to track imports, uses artificial intelligence to help fashion businesses remove Chinese goods made with Uyghur forced labour from supply chains. Altana is able to provide visibility all the way from raw materials to finished products in the form of a dynamic graph of the global supply chain.

INFINITE POSSIBILITIES

Personalisation is quite possibly AI's most attractive value proposition, with its applications spanning across entire industries.

Standardised sizing is geared to see a complete overhaul, as virtual reality try-on software matures. The era of "democrasizing", a term coined in 2022 by global trend predictor WGSN, describes the future consumer demand for personalised sizing options that go beyond small to large, female and male. The beauty sector's history of not catering to the skin tones of people of colour may be permanently over, as exact-match foundation and AI-powered colour-match technology becomes commonplace.

But it's not just affecting our wardrobes. Smart homes are becoming increasingly commonplace, allowing us to disrupt daily domestic grievances. Going beyond voice assistants and wi-fi-enabled air fryers, the home of the future will undoubtedly house robot butlers to assist in food preparation, as well as systems that are more proactive in anticipating our needs. "Smart gardens" will monitor the weather and allocate water, a feature drought-conscious Australians will no doubt be drawn to.

Advanced AI algorithms will play a crucial role in addressing Australia's environmental challenges, with the potential to be used to predict bushfires and help manage resources more efficiently. The NOBURN app, brainchild of the National Bushfire Resilience Network, uses artificial intelligence to analyse crowdsourced photos from local forests, to help predict the probability, severity and burn area of potential bushfires.

While the prospect can seem daunting, one of the most prominent areas in need of AI optimism is healthcare. Australia's ageing population, many of whom speak English as a second language, could see huge benefits as AI-powered diagnostic tools become even more advanced, enabling early detection of diseases and personalised treatment plans at scale.

Which is what associate professor Noushin Nasiri, who specialises in nanotechnology, and her team are currently working on. As part of appearing at *Vogue* Codes she spoke about her work: "When I came to Australia 10 years ago, I was informed that Australia has the highest mortality rate of melanoma in the world – 94 per cent of melanoma in Australia is because of overexposure to UV, and only six per cent is due to other factors, including genetic factors," she told the audience.

"This is how I translate that – 94 per cent is preventable, you just need to know how much UV will be absorbed by your skin."

Nasiri's work, a tiny sensor that uses nanotechnology to determine the maximum amount of UV an individual's skin type absorbs, and when their skin has reached its daily limit, is a recent investigation into personalised medicine.

CSIRO's Stela Solar urges not only the significance of medical grade AI, but the importance of regulation. "There are legitimate concerns about some AI tools, including how well they work in new settings, such as a different country or even a different hospital from where they were created, the amount of personal data they collect, if they can securely protect that data, and bias from data they're built on," she explains. "This is where emergence of industry-centric standards and best practices are important, and the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) is one example of upholding medical grade standards."

Solar believes we shouldn't fear AI-integration in the space. "Healthcare is full of data with complex connections and interdependencies that can unlock improved outcomes for our community," she says. "AI is a powerful tool to tackle this complexity, but only if done responsibly.

"If AI is designed, implemented, and managed in a robust and responsible way, it could revolutionise healthcare and become a powerful tool for doctors and medical professionals," she adds.

At present, there are AI-enabled tools that can detect suspicious skin lesions, predict coronary artery disease from scans, and data-driven robots that guide minimally invasive surgery. AI is even helping choose the best antidepressant medication for patients, analysing mammograms for breast cancer, and has been a critical tool in the discovery of two antibiotics.

It doesn't end with diagnostics. Preventative medical tools, able to discern nano fluctuations in blood, urine and skin, could ultimately save lives by picking up early signs of illnesses, dramatically reducing healthcare costs for cancer and dementia.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

It's imperative that AI is developed and deployed responsibly, with proper consideration for all the ethical and societal implications it may have. *You've Got Mail* addressed the potential loss of human connection – not just in people's personal lives, but for societies on the cusp of technological change and the implications for small business that often comes with it. We now know that despite the internet forever changing the fabric of our society, you cannot overstate its role in paving the way for social progress, global marketplaces and unprecedented access to knowledge and information, even in the face of governmental efforts to hinder it.

Could killer robots attempt to exert control over us, claiming it's for our benefit? Maybe, if we're delving into the realm of science fiction. But while such scenarios can be engaging in fictional contexts, they're distractions. As we confront the issues of AI, we must address the challenges we face in the next decade – reskilling a workforce, development of medical-grade AI, algorithmic bias, data privacy and unregulated autonomous systems – rather than as secondary concerns to human-imitative scaremongering.

Recent sci-fi portrayals of AI have painted largely dystopian futures, and unpredictable outcomes may make even the most even-keeled among us wary. But if the technological progress of the past 100 years has taught us anything, it's that for every bad outcome, there is endless opportunity for change for good.

It's hard to predict what a world powered by artificial intelligence will look like by 2030. If the wisdom of a 90s rom-com and history is anything to go by, AI will continue to transform various aspects of our lives, and has the potential to make our world more efficient, sustainable, and interconnected. If we let it. ■

Plain beautiful

The dictum that simplicity is the new luxury rings especially true this season. Find a match in clothing that hinges on the precision of lines, elevates fabric and interrogates construction. There's desire in restraint.

Styled by Alex Harrington. Photographed by Mark Borthwick.

BALENCIAGA trench coat, P.O.A. CHURCH'S shoes, P.O.A., worn throughout. On mannequin, PRADA coat, P.O.A. All prices approximate; details at Vogue.com.au/WTB.

Opposite page: STELLA McCARTNEY dress, P.O.A. THE ROW bag, $2,145. On mannequin, ALEXANDER McQUEEN dress, $7,860. Beanie, stylist's own.
This page: LOEWE dress, $4,200. On mannequin, FERRAGAMO coat, P.O.A.

MARK BORTHWICK

THE ROW jacket, $11,960, and pants, $2,455. Child wears a MAKIÉ dress, P.O.A. On mannequin, GUCCI dress, $59,000.

MARK BORTHWICK

Opposite page: LOEWE dress, $7,250. On mannequin, archival MAISON MARTIN MARGIELA, P.O.A. **This page:** HERMÈS dress, $9,855. BALENCIAGA pantaleggings, P.O.A. On mannequin, DOLCE & GABBANA coat, P.O.A. THE ROW bag, $10,685.

MARK BORTHWICK

Opposite page:
VICTORIA
BECKHAM dress,
P.O.A. **This page:**
Jil Sander top,
P.O.A. Elena Velez
skirt, P.O.A.

Hair: Jimmy Paul
Make-up: Dick Page
Model: Raquel
Zimmermann

MARK BORTHWICK

Day glow

The best party looks live atop radiant, illuminated skin. Before you reach for shimmering shadows and ultraviolet pigments, tick a perfect base off your list.

MAKE-UP KANAKO TAKASE **PHOTOGRAPHS** RICHARD BURBRIDGE

Shine a light

Add pops of glossy highlighter to the high points of the face to amp up radiance and catch the light. Balance with a similarly shimmering shade, artfully applied across the eyes.

CHANEL Baume Essentiel Multi-Use Glow Stick in Transparent, $71. DIOR Diorshow 5 Couleurs Couture Eyeshadow Palette in Denim, $120. SUVA BEAUTY Make it UV water-activated neon make-up, $20, worn throughout.

WORDS: MAHALIA CHANG. STYLING: PATTI WILSON
MODEL: HAILEY BIEBER. ALL PRICES APPROXIMATE
DETAILS AT VOGUE.COM.AU/WTB

Beam me up

A well-hydrated base is the secret behind all glowy complexions. Atop (extremely) moisturised skin, an illuminating primer adds luminosity.

CHANEL Hydra Beauty Crème, $110. DIOR Forever Glow Veil Radiance Primer, $88. M.A.C Colour Excess Gel Pencil Eye Liner in The Last Word, $47. Tiffany & Co. necklace, $4,900.

Bright eyes

Perfectly applied concealer not only disguises blemishes and dark spots, but gives dimension to the face after foundation. Target under the eyes and on the T-zone, chin and nose with a finger-tapping motion to blend.

GIORGIO ARMANI Power Fabric Concealer in 3.5, $67, from Harvey Norman. NARS Audacious Lipstick in Silvia, $55. INGLOT AMC Eyeliner Gel in 84, $18.

Smooth operator

No matter what your foundation, the correct application will maximise skin radiance while providing that sought-after seamless finish. Work your chosen product in round motions with an ultra-fluffy brush, buffing into the skin.

LANCÔME Teint Idole Ultra Wear Foundation in 325C, $75. SHU UEMURA Petal 55 Foundation Brush, $81, from Harvey Norman. INGLOT Playinn Waterproof Eyeliner Gel in Electric Green, $23. DION LEE jacket, $1,190.

RICHARD BURBRIDGE
ALL PRICES APPROXIMATE DETAILS AT VOGUE.COM.AU/WTB

Written in ink

In the wake of an abusive relationship, the writer Madison Griffiths got her second tattoo, which set her on the path to eventually becoming an artist herself. Here, she reflects on the power that she finds in permanence.

It is December of 2015, and I am sitting sheepishly in the waiting room of a tattoo parlour somewhere south of Stockholm. A man, who speaks hurriedly in a language I don't understand, wraps his machine in cling film. He then marks my skin with a stencil, and before he begins, he asks me if I'm happy to start. "Yes," I say. "I'm happy." He smiles, and so the ceremony begins. His machine thrums loudly as he dips a tiny, metal spike into a cap of ink only to tuck the drop of colour into the fleshy fabric of my arm, where a Venus symbol – a small but obvious feminist emblem – will live forever. I am barely 21, and this is only my second tattoo. I hold my arm up in the mirror, utterly thrilled.

For a day-and-a-half afterwards, it throbs a little. But by the time it begins to itch, I am barely cognisant of how it feels, of how irritating it gets when a constellation of small scabs form upon it as it endeavours to heal. This is because I am stuck instead in the throes of a greater, more injurious wound: the tail end of what I would later discover to be an abusive relationship. I am in Scandinavia, where my boyfriend lives and where I am visiting for three long months, and between crude threats, foul insults and two failed attempts at leaving, I am stuck wondering how it got to *this*, how I got *here*, and how on earth I manage to *disappear from here*. Our relationship, littered with huge, cavernous scabs I can't manage to mend. The kind that never recover.

Ten days later, my tattoo doused in soothing ointment, I do leave. It is no small feat, and a handful of friends find ways to cushion me in their support: paying for my flight home, picking me up from the airport, tucking me into their beds until I am ready, timidly, to re-enter the world. But I had bled for this. Literally. With my last thousand krona, I endeavoured to restore some sense of power, of agency, into my life by way of needle and ink. I hoped that perhaps, if a long-running feminist trademark was inscribed into my arm forever, its message would eventually become a part of my bloodstream, surging through me with an honest, ardent pulse. I hoped that it would instil in me the tools I needed to always find ways to return to myself.

And in a way, it must have, as close to a decade later, after peeling a wetted stencil from the body of a client and asking her how she feels as her eyes begin to trace the outline of her new tattoo with eagerness, I understand intimately a tattoo's power. "Happy," she says, and so I begin, dabbing ointment onto the fleshy bareness of her forearm, and paring a needle to her skin.

The first body I ever tattooed was my own. I was 25, subletting a room in an old, restored fire station in North Melbourne, and

GETTY IMAGES, KATERINA TSATSANI/TRUNK ARCHIVE

As I etch a new wound into the area of their choice, they offer up other wounds: absent fathers and controlling mothers, the last round of IVF ...

From left: Angelina Jolie, Catherine McNeil, Rihanna and Zoë Kravitz.

had decided it was time to succumb to a long-standing curiosity of mine. I wanted to know how it would feel to tattoo myself, to inscribe meaning into my skin directly. I ordered a handful of tattoo needles, some ink and a haphazard assortment of antiseptic supplies online, and – at the foot of my bed – lay out a sheet, my paraphernalia, and began making a mess of my thigh. In due time, I fell in love with the craft, eventually becoming specialised in text-based designs and skilled enough after a year or two to pursue it reliably as a career, tattooing a regular assembly of clients out of a studio in Brunswick.

Margot Mifflin wrote, in her 1997 book *Bodies of Subversion: A Secret History of Women and Tattoo*: "Tattoos appeal to contemporary women both as emblems of empowerment in an era of feminist gains and as badges of self-determination at a time when controversies about abortion rights, date rape and sexual harassment have made them think hard about who controls their bodies, and why." I am unsurprised by her observations, remembering that what led me to that parlour all those years ago was the niggling feeling that an injustice had taken place, that somebody had taken something from me, and here I was, with the help of an unassuming Swedish tattoo artist, taking it back.

In recent years, tattooing has changed culturally. It has become incredibly widespread, appealing now to people of all demographics. Women, especially, are significantly more inked than ever before. Tattoos are regularly seen in the public eye, with the body art of celebrities such as Zoë Kravitz, Angelina Jolie and Rihanna gracing the Pinterest boards of millennials around the world, as they endeavour to discover and emulate their own inked style.

In the time since my first tattoo, I, too, have changed. My limbs, neck, hands, torso and back reveal an impressive catalogue of designs, too many to count, and each is woven and stacked together to tell the story of where I've been and where I'm going. I have also, in that time, been on the other side of the needle, and have listened to a million and one admissions from a million and one kinds of people. They, like me, have stories with a mythology that can be found in the marks and imprints they carry with them, in the stickers they adorn their skin with. As I etch a new wound into the area of their choice, they offer up other wounds: be it the tales of absent fathers and controlling mothers, of how the persistent hum of church sermons taught them how to carry a shame they can't quite shake, of the last round of IVF, the first round of chemotherapy, of the way grief will sometimes try to swallow you, and what happens when it does.

There's something particularly sacred about leaving somebody forever marked. During one particular session, a young woman insisted I tattoo the word "dyke" onto her abdomen. She lay calmly on the tattoo bed as I engraved each letter with delicate precision. I learned quickly about how she arrived at her queerness all those years ago; of the first time she stole a kiss from a friend-turned-lover, which forced her to reckon with her sexuality. Of the joy of stepping into a gay club as a teenager, and of the fog of homophobia that follows her still. Somewhere between the K and the E, I realised how powerful my client's gesture was. In intentionally wounding oneself with a designation such as "dyke", a slur historically meant to humiliate and persecute queer women just like her, she is reclaiming its title in every sense of the word. It is her wound now, and she wears it with pride. Nestled in the physiology of her tattoo, as well as the pores of her skin, is where her liberation can be found.

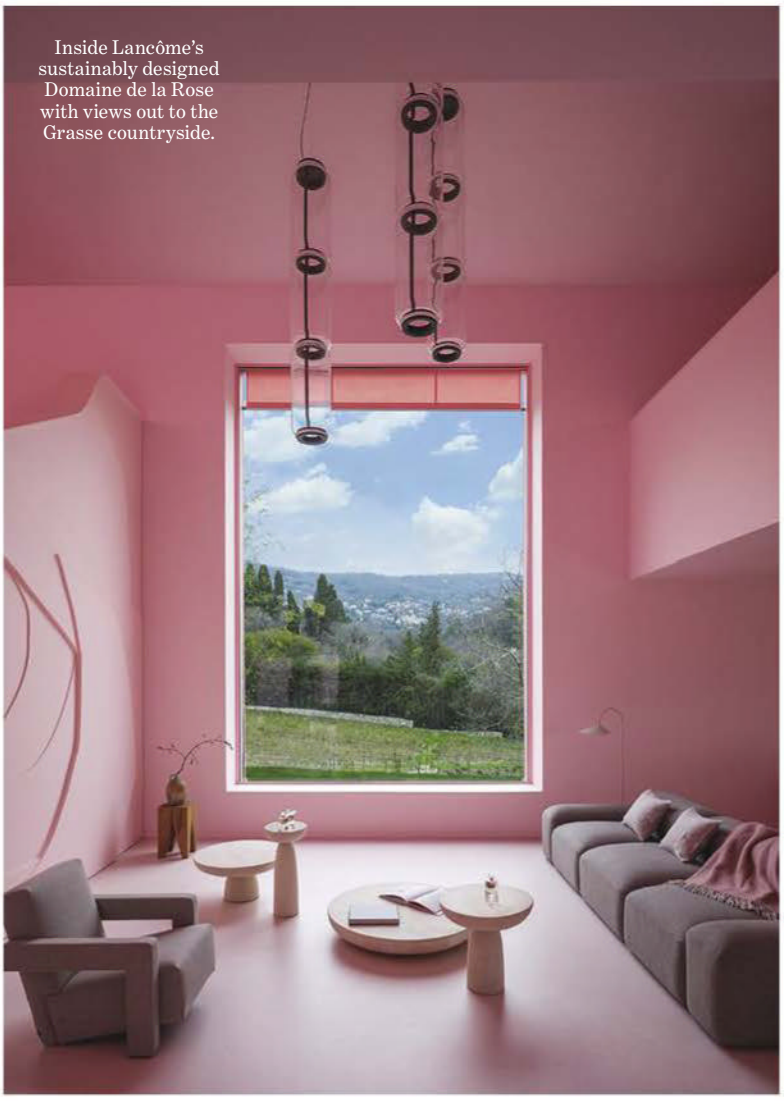
I looked for mine, too, the last time I tattooed myself. Not long after I underwent an abortion in 2021, I etched a small passage of text onto my arm in a bid to feel more in control of my body after the procedure. As I write this, I am able to catch a glimpse of the tattoo – now a little faded with age – and still it reminds me of the power I yield when it comes to deciding how I'd like to occupy the world. What tattoos have taught me is simple, and magnificent: that all of us, but women in particular, tattooed or otherwise, walk around day in, day out wearing the cuts and nicks of life itself. If there was a way to make that wound yours – to adorn it with twinkles, or words, or colour or perhaps even just a Venus symbol – why wouldn't you?

Madison Griffiths is the author of Tissue *(Ultimo Press, $34.99), on sale now.*

A rose is a rose

Step into the sweeping fields of the south of France, where Lancôme is making a home for sustainability and innovation between the blushing pink of the rose bushes. By Mahalia Chang.

Picture this: you're driving through the French countryside in the height of spring. While the sun beams down, the air is cut through with the soundtrack of an idyllic provincial morning; bees buzzing, church bells chiming and the clip of tyres over cobblestone roads. Then, as your car peels around winding corners, neat hedges abutting, a vision rises before you: a pink monolith, standing in the middle of a field.



Inside Lancôme's sustainably designed Domaine de la Rose with views out to the Grasse countryside.

Domaine de la Rose is the name – a sweet, fitting name – of such a vision. Domaine de la Rose, situated in Grasse in the south of France, is both the metaphorical and the literal home of French beauty giant Lancôme. After being acquired in 2020, the four-hectare estate has been recently given a (very pink) face lift and now serves as the epicentre of Lancôme's ethos – an education centre, a meeting place, a home of inspiration and a monument to the company's commitment to sustainability and ethical horticultural practices. Many of which are seen inside Le Domaine itself.

The vivid pink walls are insulated with lavender straw harvested from the estate outside, while rice straw was sourced from the coastal region of Camargue to help insulate the roof. The house draws its power from renewable energy and uses LED lighting as an energy efficient alternative. Even the – yes, pink – decor has been artfully plucked from the likes of Editions Midi and La Borne ceramics, as well as local artisans.

"Everything was taught and imagined in the most sustainable way," says Dr Annie Black, scientific director of Lancôme. "Buildings existed on the property [before the redesign]. Some of them were demolished to keep more space for growing plants. Others, when the house was renovated, were taken apart, brick by a brick; everything was recycled. It took a long time. We could have done this a lot faster, but we wanted to do this right."

In the fields of the estate live the flora and fauna that embody Lancôme's biodiversity journey – 163 species of them, to be exact. Safeguarding the varietals, as well as championing regenerative cultivation of a number of plants, including rose, jasmine, iris, bitter orange and tuberose, rows of which grow merrily outside, is a key purpose of the estate.

"For us, it's a way to show also our commitments to sustainability," says Dr Black. "With Domaine de la Rose, we have this space that is ours, that we're able to show what we stand for. We try to show the way that we grow roses, the fact that we're trying to bring in new perfume plants, and try to put the spotlight on all of this history and knowledge about the fragrance plants."

But while the undeniably Instagrammable building at the centre may draw the eye more keenly, the real story is unfurling outside. Growing in abundance in the sun-dappled fields, the key behind Lancôme's iconic collection Absolue, is the Perpetual Rose. Not a wild rose, but one that was created and bred for the specific purpose of skincare.

First released in the 60s, Lancôme has expanded and evolved its golden skincare collection for decades, returning to the nutrient-rich soil of Grasse to source its inspiration. There it cultivated the Perpetual Rose, which, as its name suggests, blooms nearly all year round. Using patented methods, Lancôme extracts its star ingredient, Rose Absolue, from the petals when they are harvested in the early morning, just as they begin to bloom. There is both a science and an art to the harvest, and it requires more than 800 kilograms of rose petals to produce a single kilo of Rose Absolue. Also grown on the property is the Rose Centifolia, which in addition to featuring in Absolue, also stars in Lancôme's range of rose-forward perfumes, such as it is famed for its smell.

"It's always been a franchise that had the rose at its heart," says Dr Black. "A lot of very important discoveries were made for [Absolue], like the first time that we used biotechnology on roses, where we had rose cells that we used to develop an active ingredient, and that was in the early 2000s. And it's really pushing rose science to its maximum. Of course, for many people, roses seem very banal, but they're not. They're a great source of innovation."

Such innovation formed the basis of Absolue, a collection 12 products strong, which focuses on regeneration and protection of the skin, something the brand heralds as "longevity science".

"Our goal with Absolue, we're trying to be more proactive so that we have skincare that, yes, will do correction – because that's what women are expecting when they're buying a product – but bringing them more benefits that are proactive and protective. So when your skin ages, it ages better," Dr Black adds. This proaction includes everything from cell regeneration to strengthening the collagen and elastin fibres in the matrix of the skin to replump and densify. No easy task.

Left: LANCÔME Absolue Light Cream, and Soft Cream, $538 each, and Eye Cream, $264. **Above and below**: Pink outside and in at Domaine de la Rose.

But, as with Absolue, Domaine de la Rose and even Lancôme itself, it all returns to the rose. Not only an emblem of the house and a star ingredient, but as a glimpse into Lancôme's vision, perhaps seen through the copse of blushing petals.

"The rose is in itself a symbol of many different things. It's a symbol of love. It's a symbol of beauty. I think it's also, for the brand, a symbol of resilience, adaptability. Because the rose has been on this planet for thousands and thousands and thousands of years. It has adapted. There's a very interesting link with women and the way we imagine beauty; positive, resilient, powerful. I think there's, for me at least, a very interesting parallel between roses and femininity. All different, all unique and all beautiful."

"The rose is in itself a symbol of many different things. It's a symbol of love. It's a symbol of beauty ... a symbol of resilience, adaptability"

LAUREN BAMFORD, LAZIZ HAMANI
ALL PRICES APPROXIMATE DETAILS AT VOGUE.COM.AU/WTB

GAME CHANGER

Introducing Redken's revolutionary collection of hair repair. More concentrated, more prescriptive, more transformative – it's a whole new you in a bottle.

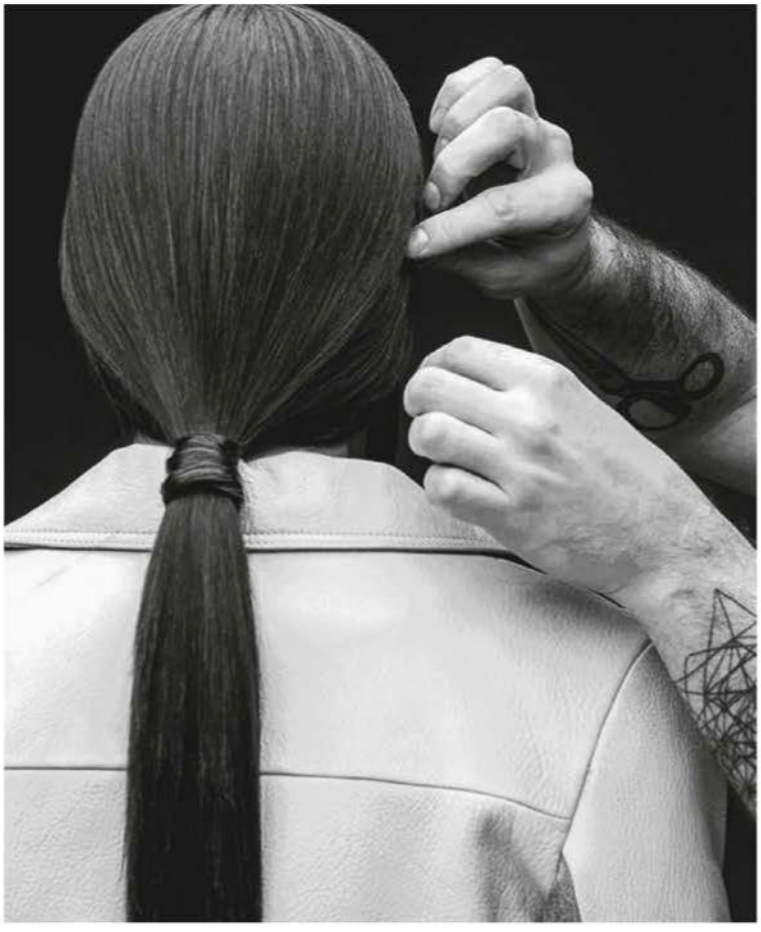
INTENSIVE REPAIR

You have likely heard about Redken's game-changing Acidic Bonding Concentrate products. And if you haven't, you need to! The innovative collection started as a shampoo and conditioner duo and soon after became a family of four. The products are designed for all hair types and textures, even the most demanding, processed hair.

Featuring citric acid, each product contains Redken's Bonding Care Complex. The system fortifies weakened bonds to improve hair strength and resiliency. As Redken's most concentrated care, your hair is set for ultimate repair, intense conditioning and colour fade protection.

The salon professional products are backed by expert stylists, like Redken artist and advocate Sheree Knoble.

"Acidic Bonding Concentrate has completely changed my client's hair," says Knoble. "I don't do any colour without it. The products rebuild broken bonds and leave hair feeling stronger and healthier after just one use. It's truly incredible."



REDKEN
5TH AVENUE NYC

Shop the range at Adore Beauty, Oz Hair & Beauty, The Iconic or your local professional Redken hair salon.

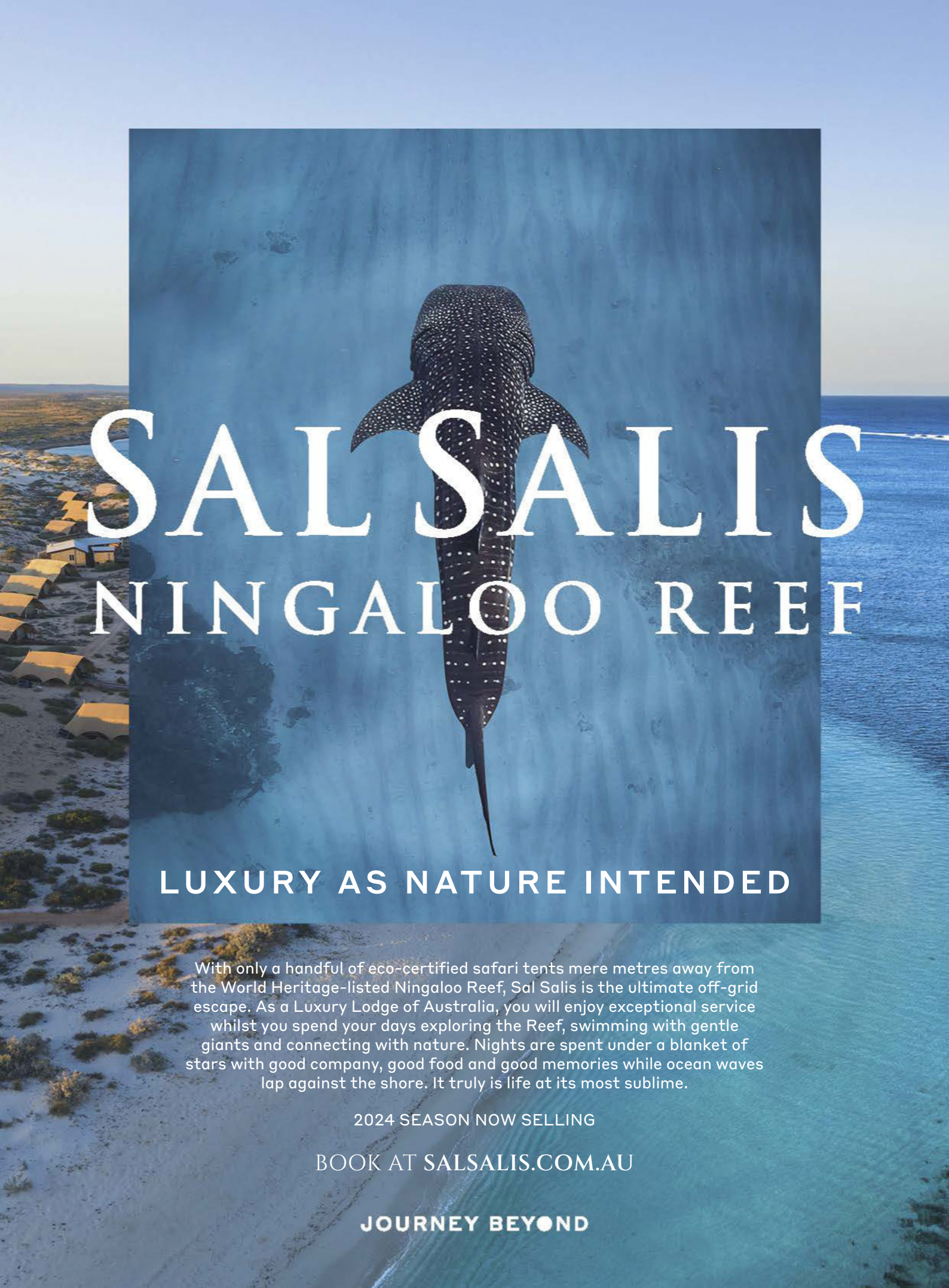
Paint the town

The easiest way to kick your look up a notch while also boosting your mood? A slick of high-shine polish in the boldest and brightest colours of the season.

Clockwise from top left: ESSIE Gel Couture nail polish in Stitch by Stitch, $16, from amazon.com.au; GUCCI Vernis à Ongles Nail Polish in Melinda Green, $57; HERMÈS Les Mains Hermès nail polish in Rouge Amazone, $75; SIENNA nail polish in Sunflower, $28; DIOR Nail Glow treatment, $44; HERMÈS Les Mains Hermès nail polish in Orange Brûlé, $75; GUCCI Vernis à Ongles Nail Polish in Lucy Baby Blue, $57; CHANEL Le Vernis Nail Colour in Immortelle, $45.

WORDS: MAHALIA CHANG
ALL PRICES APPROXIMATE DETAILS AT VOGUE.COM.AU/WTB

ART DIRECTION ARQUETTE COOKE **PHOTOGRAPH** LAUREN BAMFORD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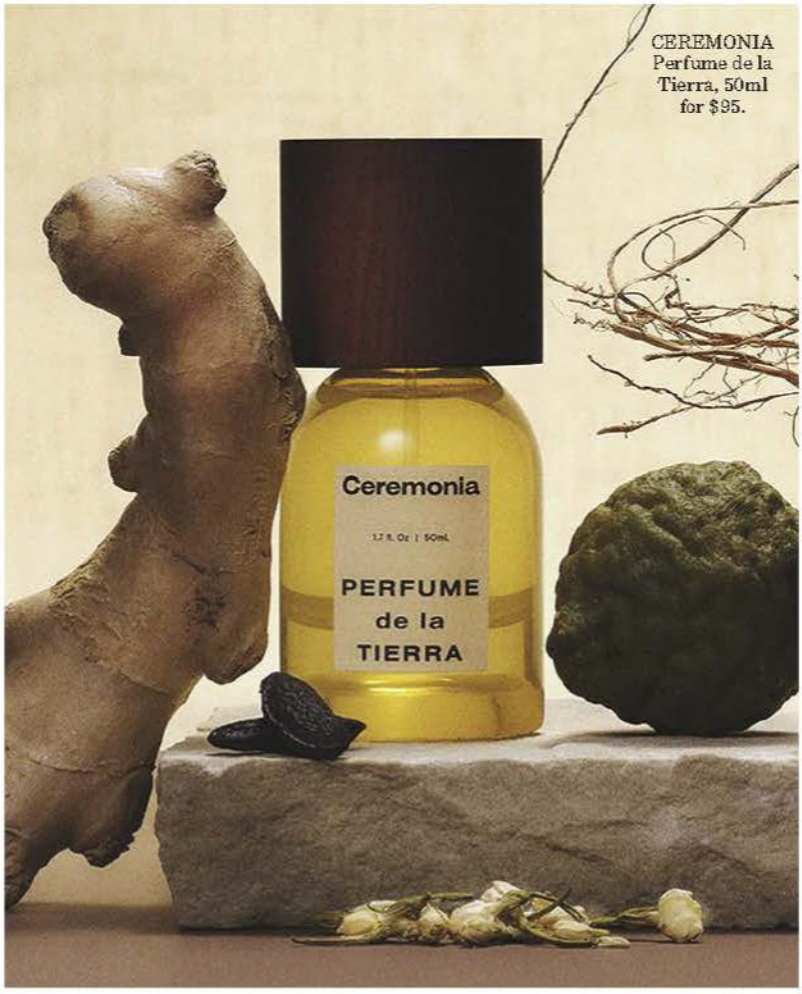
Opening ceremony

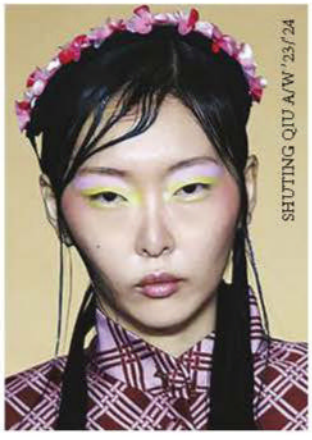
Ethical haircare brand Ceremonia is grounded in Latinx heritage and takes inspiration from the lushness of clean South American ingredients. By Mahalia Chang.



Celebrated hair and fragrance brand Ceremonia finally lands on Australian shores this month, exclusively at Mecca.

Rooted in Latinx heritage through founder Babba Rivera, the brand offers hair care for all hair types – curly to coily, straight to frizzy – shining a beauty spotlight on Latin America. Within its much-lauded range of shampoos, conditioners, treatments, brushes and styling gels, Ceremonia calls on organic ingredients sourced from Latin America, including murumuru butter from Brazil, maracujá oil from Ecuador and blue agave extract from Mexico, all harvested ethically. In line with the brand's philosophy of clean, natural formulations, all the products are free from silicones, parabens, sulphates, phthalates and artificial colourants, as well as skin irritants and harsh ingredients.

Its latest release, Perfume de la Tierra (perfume of the earth), champions the South American tonka bean, which is supported by notes of bergamot, pink pepper, vetiver and driftwood. The unisex fragrance adds a touch of sweetness via notes of peach and jasmine petals, for a serene and enigmatic scent, reminiscent of a lush, vibrant and humid rainforest.



Backstage insider

THE LOOK: Amped-up blush
THE LOW-DOWN: Forget natural. This new take on blush is all about bigger, bolder, brighter. Play with metallics, layering and sun-kissed placements for a flushed take on spring beauty. From shimmering golds across the cheeks at Altuzarra, to swirled pigments around the eyes at Shuting Qiu, and splotched-on pinks low on the cheeks at Jacquemus, embrace a more vivid approach. →

Spot check

Aotearoa beauty darling Emma Lewisham unveils her first (and only) new release of 2023, the Supernatural Blemish Serum. Designed to target blemishes, blackheads and any skin imperfections, the serum harnesses a living probiotic strain which inhibits the growth of acne-causing bacteria while hydrating and nourishing the skin.

EMMA LEWISHAM Supernatural Blemish Face Serum with Live Skin Probiotic, $158.

Add to cart: Fame by Rabanne

If you can wear the perfect little party dress, why can't your perfume? A daring question posed by Rabanne has produced Fame. Spicy and juicy, tropical notes of mango and vanilla are warmed up by the presence of sandalwood and Somaliland incense, all found inside a glittering bottle wearing the well-known and loved Rabanne metal mesh dress.

Paco RABANNE Fame EDP, 80ml for $215.

Pin drop: Dior Spa Hôtel Plaza Athénée, Paris

Travellers chasing the tail end of the European holiday season may find the perfect sanctuary in Paris. Housed within the iconic Hôtel Plaza Athénée on avenue Montaigne lives Dior's newly reinvented spa. A continuation of the partnership between neighbours, Hôtel Plaza Athénée and Dior's 30 Montaigne store, the serene space will offer treatments both holistic and high-tech.

Soothing peach tones inside Dior Spa, Paris.

LUI Shave Cream, $39.95.

Blade runner

Shaving is a never-loved task, but Australian brand LUI strives to change that. Its offering a subscription-model supply of a custom, ergonomic razor, nickel-free blades and a lush shaving cream. Founders Rebecca Harding and partner Ingrid Kesa, offer their tips for the perfect shave.

1. ALWAYS USE A SHAVING CREAM. The right shave cream creates a barrier that protects and nurtures the skin. It's important to use a formulation created specifically for shaving.
2. SHAVE WITH THE DIRECTION OF HAIR — THEN AGAINST IT. A common misconception about shaving is to go against the grain, but this can cause ingrown hairs and razor bumps. To get a smooth and clean shave, go with the direction of hair growth to "trim" the hair down and then go against the grain for a silky, luminous finish.
3. REFRAME SHAVING AS A RITUAL. Women's shaving has been forever overlooked, but we think it deserves a place in the self-care routine. Slow down and take your time. Turn it into a sensorial experience by choosing products that are beautiful and a pleasure to use. ■

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FRANKIE4

STEP INTO INNOVATION

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Talk is cheap

From boundaries to gaslighting, therapy buzzwords have become part of our common parlance. But, Brodie Lancaster asks, are we guilty of talking the therapy talk without walking the walk?

Anna* had been seeing a psychologist regularly for more than five years before she began noticing some important and repeated issues cropping up in her personal relationships.

"I take a lot of notes after my therapy sessions because I want to be able to see patterns in my behaviour," the 34-year-old editor from Melbourne says. And she spotted one pattern in particular. Fearing that being unavailable would lead to her friends abandoning her, Anna would drop anything to tend to their needs, regardless of how off-kilter it made her feel. "What I thought was being a good friend, I realised, was acting like an ambulance. I'd eradicate boundaries with people, then resent them when they took too much from me."

With the support of the therapist she's been seeing 10 times a year (via the Australian government's subsidised mental health care scheme) since she was 21, Anna began setting boundaries to protect her mental and emotional space from people who tended to encroach on it with little regard for her wellbeing. Therapy gave her both the vernacular to understand the issues she was experiencing – and the tools to start repairing them. Where once she made herself endlessly available to her friends, she started telling people she couldn't make it. She began saying, "I hope you're okay," instead of, "What can I do?"

The ambulance sirens belonged to other people, and the boundaries belonged to her, she realised – even if she never had to say the word "boundary" to begin enacting them. "You can only control your own behaviour, and what I perceived to be people's expectations of me were actually coming from me."

Discussion of boundary-setting made headlines in recent months, when Sarah Brady, the ex-girlfriend of actor Jonah Hill, publicly shared what she described as "emotionally abusive" text messages he allegedly sent her during and after their relationship. What Hill supposedly called his boundaries, though, were more akin to instructions or demands for how he preferred his partner to dress, behave and socialise. (Hill has not commented.) It was just one of the endless misuses of "therapy speak" – the medical or diagnostic vernacular past generations might've classified as "psychobabble" – that you've probably encountered on social media in recent years.

Among the terms that have crept into everyday conversation are "toxic", often used to describe unhealthy or damaging behaviour, and "gaslighting" – which, in its casual misuse, can translate to anything on the abuse spectrum, from lying to extreme psychological manipulation. By social media's measure, selfish or egotistical people are "narcissists", people having low days are

PHOTOGRAPH: UNSPLASH/JOÃO OLIVEIRA
*NAME HAS BEEN CHANGED

automatically "depressed" and any instance of personal baggage is immediately classed as "trauma".

These are, of course, all vital terms necessary for diagnosing disorders or classifying patterns of behaviour. Their use has evolved and grown, but therapists have referred to them for almost a century, since the World Health Organisation first began classifying mental disorders in 1949. But when they're taken out of the space of experts, stripped of context and put in the hands of the general public eager to find a bandaid for their discomfort, their meaning becomes sanitised, commonplace and often inaccurate.

"Any language that increases your ability to talk about what you're experiencing – and then to seek care – is always going to be a good thing," says Chris Cheers, a Melbourne-based psychologist and mental health educator. The author of *The New Rulebook: Notes From a Psychologist to Help Redefine the Way You Live*, Cheers has noticed a significant shift in not just the number of people seeking out mental health care in recent years, but also the volume of conversations about it.

During Melbourne's ongoing covid lockdowns, Cheers shared helpful and calming resources on social media for his followers. He also observed people getting familiar with the language of therapy – "but not so much from therapists", Cheers says. "With TikTok and Instagram, or whatever it might be, people are using the terminology a lot more, but maybe not necessarily with the same meaning."

Trends have never moved more rapidly than they do on TikTok, and every day there seems to be a new iteration of one that morphs from the destigmatised nature of therapy speak. The "red flags" hashtag has been used more than 10 billion times on TikTok, while "trauma" is sitting at over 24 billion. Daily exercise is recast as "mental health walks", self-care is framed as a rationalisation to buy products and order take-out.

"It concerns me when it feels like influencers disingenuously use the language of psychology to a) sell products or b) equip themselves with a level of expertise they don't possess," Anna says. Ads and sponsored posts traffic in broad, sweeping surface-level generalisations designed to appeal to the vast majority. But that doesn't stop some creators from declaring their unique experience a universal one to increase engagement. "When people paint a psychological experience as a monolith and say, 'This is the same for everyone,' problems can arise. People are looking for solutions to discomfort all the time, and there isn't one. You can't eradicate discomfort."

In periods of extreme stress, our minds and bodies and nervous systems are impacted. In its 2022 report, the Australian Bureau of Statistics found that around two million people with "a 12-month mental disorder" saw a professional in 2020-21, a number than doubled since its previous report in 2007. It's no wonder that when a generation newly articulate in therapeutic language experiences so many external stressors – from covid to climate change, war to recessions – they apply that vocabulary to their normal, human feelings.

"We are starting to view our experiences as symptoms of disorders and therefore seeing them as something wrong with us that needs to be fixed," Cheers explains, "Rather than just acknowledging that emotions are a normal reaction to abnormal circumstances."

We've accidentally created a culture, he says, wherein our needs can only be met if we express them using the language usually reserved for trained professionals. "Whether that be our needs to take the day off work, our needs to have changes in our work environment, our needs for others to respect us, our need for rest – we feel like the only way people will offer us help or respect our needs is by using diagnostic terminology."

Diagnosis is an essential and incredibly helpful way to validate ourselves and our experiences, and to access help, Cheers is quick to affirm, but it also is just the first step. The ones that come after need to stem from a deep, nuanced understanding of ourselves. There's no shortcut to that intensity of self communion, no 15-second video (or feature-length documentary on Netflix, like the one Jonah Hill directed about his therapist, Dr Phil Stutz) that can serve as a quick-fix or salve.

"I think in every workshop I've ever done, people want practical strategies. They just want me to come in and tell them the steps they need to do to feel better," Cheers says. "And it's easy for me to tell you what to do. It's easy to have a Netflix special or an article that kind of tells you what you should do. The challenge – and I think where therapy comes in – is how you actually do that in your own life when there are lots of factors acting against your ability to put those things into practice. Whether they be internal factors related to your own trauma history, or external factors, like stigma and discrimination and the cost of living crisis."

> "It's easy for me to tell you what to do. The challenge – and I think where therapy comes in – is how you actually do that in your own life"

When we're trying to improve a relationship, or make productive, useful and ideally long-term changes in our lives, the beginning and end is the same: ourselves. We process, heal, establish our needs, expectations and, yes, our boundaries, internally. "Nothing you will ever read or no therapist is going to help you understand yourself as much as you will by taking the time to sit with yourself and listen to your emotions," Cheers says. "Give yourself space to honour what you need and listen to what your body is communicating."

The simplicity of mental health advice or trends online is inherent to their appeal, and it's also the reason we keep coming back to them. When we're overwhelmed in our family environments, being stepped over at work or struggling to connect with our partner, we're looking for an explanation and permission to feel discomfort. "But we don't need an external video or article to tell us that it's okay to communicate our needs," Chris says. "There are no prerequisites for worth."

Thirteen years on from her first session, Anna is still discovering things about herself, realisations that unspool slowly, with time and emotional work. The world, workplaces, other people, relationship hurdles, she says, aren't going anywhere. And neither are the tools she has to cope with them. "It's easy to think the problem is coming from the outside and you can use therapy speak to control other people," she says. "But it's all inside. You can't regulate the world, so you have to regulate yourself."

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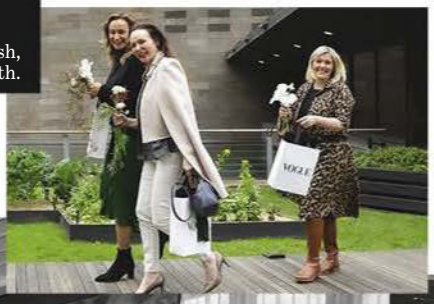
From left: Edwina McCann, Kate Walsh, Guillaume Brahimi and Kit Bashford in Perth.

Left: Outside Melbourne's National Gallery of Victoria.



Dr Laura McGillivray, Danielle Statham and Francesca Wallace on the panel at the Gold Coast event.

Let's toast

Delicious food and stimulating chat headlined at the *Vogue* Codes In Conversation breakfast event series hosted by *Vogue* Australia and Audi. Held in August across four cities, the theme this year was Change for Good, which saw women who are driving progress in their fields delve into the future of technology and its impact on society while sharing stories that change the way we think. Kicking off in Sydney at Sydney Modern, Stela Solar, director of the National AI Centre at the CSIRO, delivered insights on "AI into the future: from the everyday to the futuristic". At The Star Gold Coast, FibreTrace's Danielle Statham and Queensland University of Technology researcher Dr Laura McGillivray tackled the topic "Tracking our clothes: how ethical fashion needs a tech revolution". In Perth, actor Kate Walsh captivated guests at Bistro Guillaume speaking about her experiences as a woman in an industry historically dominated by men. While at Melbourne's National Gallery of Victoria, Julie Reilly OAM and digital rights activist Samantha Floreani discussed "Building a business into the next 10 years: how to navigate a digital-first future". Sated by fine food and great conversation, attendees also took home a *Vogue* gift bag.

From left: McGillivray, Statham and Wallace.

Tables inside Bistro Guillaume, Perth.

Above: Guests enter Bistro Guillaume in Perth. **Right**: *Vogue* gift bags.

LUCAS DAWSON, LUCAS JARVIS, JUSTIN NICHOLAS, LAJOS VARGA

Get smart

Inspiring, educational and fun, Codes Campus, presented by Optus and supported by Audi, debuted at the University of Technology Sydney this August with an inspiring schedule of live talks from Australia's top thinkers and changemakers. Kate Aitken, vice president of People and Culture at Optus, introduced the event by acknowledging the underrepresentation of women in STEM, and shared how Optus is addressing gender imbalance within its industry. With Change for Good the theme of the morning, the four panel talks plus Q&A sessions provided a vital platform for leaders in a diverse range of sectors to share their knowledge and passion within their STEM fields and look at how we can achieve a more positive future for women in STEM. Topics ranged from financial literacy and wellbeing to medical advances, forging a career in STEM, and from leading tech and data scientists, a forecast on how the world of technology will look in 2030. The unsurprising reveal? STEM is set to be more important and relevant than ever.

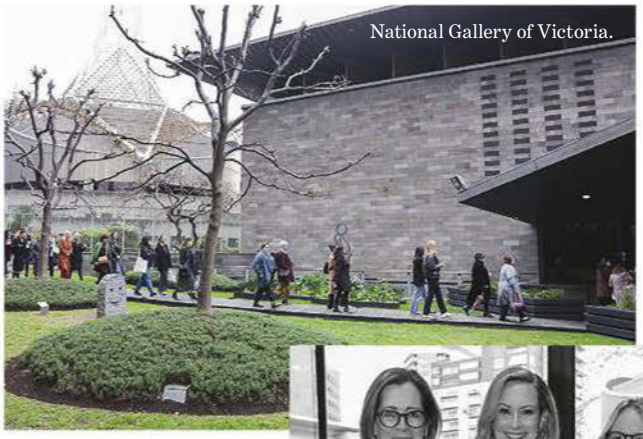
The scene is set for Campus Codes at University of Technology Sydney.

Kate Aitken, vice president of People and Culture at Optus speaking at Codes Campus in Sydney.

From left: *Vogue* Australia's Nikki Chowdhury with Professor Fang Chen, Dr Zena Assaad, Dr Julia Reisser and Honré Young, on stage at Campus Codes.

Vogue Australia's Jessica Montague at *Vogue* Codes Campus.

Attendees at the In Conversation event in Sydney.



National Gallery of Victoria.

Above left: *Vogue* Australia's Edwina McCann and Stela Solar for the Sydney breakfast. **Above**: Coffee cart, Melbourne. **Left**: Jessica Montague and Kit Bashford in Sydney.

From left: Julie Reilly OAM, Melissa Doyle and Samantha Floreani, speakers at the Melbourne breakfast event.

Right: Chanupa Amarasinghe (left) and Guandong Gatluak. **Below**: Politix ambassador and actor Dacre Montgomery.

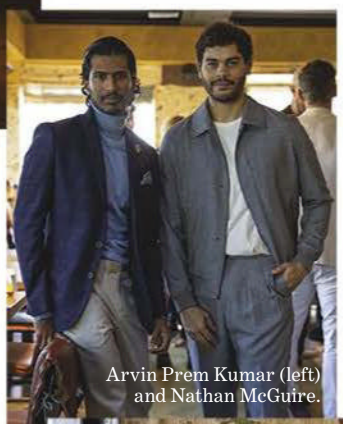
Lachie Brycki.

Aaron Evans and Amy Castano.

Montgomery and Liv Pollock.

Mikka Byarugaba.

Vogue Australia's Mahalia Chang and Montgomery.



Arvin Prem Kumar (left) and Nathan McGuire.

Strong suit

It was a suave and sophisticated crowd that gathered at The Ace Hotel in Sydney for a breakfast to celebrate menswear brand Politix's new era. Hosted by actor and Politix ambassador Dacre Montgomery, alongside *Vogue* Australia's head of digital content, Mahalia Chang, attendees learned about the company's rebrand and take on modern masculinity – the theme of its recent campaign. With an emphasis on authenticity and individuality, Politix champions an ethos of "a suit for every man". For the event, Montgomery modelled a deep blue linen ensemble, part of the new collection, which features looser fits and more luxurious fabrics such as wool and French linen. Also lending their support – and style – on the day were models Nathan McGuire, Mikka Byarugaba and Moe Alhassan, as well as Tim Robards and Jadé and Lachie Brycki.

From left: Will Stokoe, Jadé Brycki, Bella Varelis and Josh Carrol.

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VOGUE DIARY

Explore what's in store and worth having this month.

PUREBRED

Daniel Lee drew from one of Burberry's oldest codes for this coveted accessory: the fun yet functional Knight bag. Featuring a "horse clip", a nod to the brand's Equestrian Knight motif, it's available in a variety of sizes, colours and materials, including this version in leather and shearling. Visit au.burberry.com.

JET SET

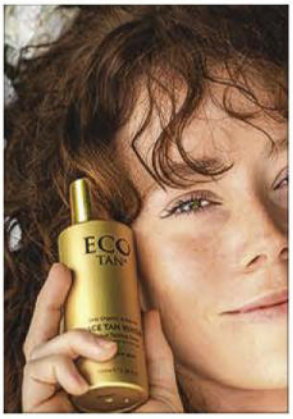
Who said travel has to leave your skin stressed and dehydrated? Luxury brand La Prairie offers a one-of-a-kind pre-flight experience at Sydney International Airport. Indulge in one of four decadent treatments designed to replenish skin before flying. Go to laprairie.com/en-au/airport-treatments.

QUEEN BEE

Backed by science and harnessing the restorative power of Ikaria honey from Greece, Guerlain's new Abeille Royale Honey Treatment Night Cream has a silky smooth texture and restores skin elasticity, brightens and reduces the appearance of wrinkles. Find out more at guerlain.com.

FINE CUT

With the launch of Pandora lab-grown diamonds in Australia, the jeweller has released three new collections: Pandora Infinite, Pandora Nova, and Pandora Era. Pictured right, the Infinite 14 carat white gold bangle set with a stunning lab-grown diamond. Discover your favourite forever piece at au.pandora.net.



GOLDEN TOUCH

The perfect alternative to foundation for summer, Eco Tan's cult favourite, Face Tan Water, is an organic gradual self-tanner for the face, neck and décolletage. As well as gifting skin with a natural glow, it hydrates, soothes and evens tone for all skin types. Get glowing at ecotan.com.au.

FRENCH DRESSING

Mirroring the grandeur of France's oldest city, the Marseille Crossbody Clutch is stylish with a rebellious streak. Offering lots of room inside and a removable crossbody strap, in the blink of an eye, you can change from a day of wandering to a night on the town. Go to wandererstravelco.com.

Libra
23 September-23 October

Mercury adds logic to all you say and do now, even with your ruler Venus fixating your thoughts on love. A New Moon eclipse in your sign plus Pluto out of reverse hint at building something good out of chaos. As Mars pushes you to be a go-getter now, a Full Moon eclipse urges you to release what you don't need to make room for something far better to fill the void.
STYLE ICON: Doja Cat

Scorpio
24 October-22 November

The Sun boosts your energy now and Venus nudges you to show your friends and ambitions some big love. A New Moon eclipse brings unusual insights and Mars gives you the drive to act upon them. While Pluto helps you say what needs to be said to clear the air, a Full Moon eclipse guides you either to deepen a connection or release whoever has been hindering your healing.
STYLE ICON: Emma Stone

Sagittarius
23 November-21 December

It's your best month all year to launch new projects and collaborations, thanks to an empowering New Moon eclipse. Venus adds harmony to your career, and your finances could rise from the ashes now with Pluto out of reverse. As Mars fires you up to plan for the future, success is in your sights with a Full Moon eclipse pushing you out of a health and work routine rut.
STYLE ICON: Chrissy Teigen

Capricorn
22 December-20 January

Your career could soar now, with a New Moon eclipse adding fresh flair to your work style. Pluto in your sign focuses on the next stage of your evolution, while Venus could bring a trip away for work or health. Friendships and ambitions get a Mars and Mercury boost so that "action plus words equals results", and a Full Moon eclipse urges you to get real about romance.
STYLE ICON: Angourie Rice

Aquarius
21 January-18 February

A fascination with travel, spirituality or media could arise now via a New Moon eclipse. Venus makes money and power flourish just as Mars puts your career into overdrive and Pluto clears away emotional debris. It's a cosmic move endorsed by a Full Moon eclipse in your home zone, so that when Pluto enters your sign in 2024 you and *chez vous* are ready to be transformed
STYLE ICON: Mary Fowler

Pisces
19 February-20 March

Complex commitments need discussing now, with Mercury and a New Moon eclipse offering an unusual solution and Venus helping to smooth the way. Friendships, hopes and dreams get a cosmic detox, and with Mars and Mercury partnering up your big ideas will be heard. Forget "what might have been" as a Full Moon eclipse helps you let go of rumours or feuds and move on.
STYLE ICON: Camila Cabello

Aries
21 March-20 April

A New Moon eclipse could stir up something you didn't see coming in a partnership, though with Venus now out of a reckless phase love doesn't need to hurt. Pluto blasts through your career for a clean sweep towards a new structure, while your ruler Mars highlights power and commitments, with a Full Moon eclipse challenging you to drop your emotional security blanket.
STYLE ICON: Jessica Chastain

Taurus
21 April-21 May

The cosmic focus now is on you and your relationships. Health is ripe for a makeover via a New Moon eclipse, and your ruler Venus raises your romantic standards with a link to lucky Jupiter in your sign. Partnerships get intense, and a Full Moon eclipse in your sign clears away fears about leaving what's comfortable and steers you towards what's unknown and exciting.
STYLE ICON: Ana de Armas

Gemini
22 May-21 June

Your ruler Mercury and a New Moon eclipse bring a fresh twist to love and artistic endeavours this month. After some hard lessons learned, Pluto now out of retrograde clears a path to commitment and Venus adds harmony at home. With Mars in the mix, work boosts your health and soul, and a Full Moon eclipse detoxes memories so you can let go of what's holding you back.
STYLE ICON: Kylie Minogue

Cancer
22 June-22 July

Focus on lifestyle discussions this month, with a New Moon eclipse rebooting your work/life balance. Venus casts you as calm and reassuring but your sultry side is also activated now with Mars energising your libido and creativity. While Pluto transforms close partnerships, a Full Moon eclipse also helps you re-evaluate friendships and re-route your hopes and dreams.
STYLE ICON: Selena Gomez

Leo
23 July-23 August

This month's New Moon eclipse transforms the way you connect, making diplomacy your new USP. Venus highlights healthier habits around money, and home is where your heart is with your ruler the Sun moving into *chez vous.* As work and health routines get a Pluto-inspired detox, a Full Moon eclipse could bring an unexpected but necessary deviation with your career.
STYLE ICON: Cara Delevingne

Virgo
24 August-23 September

A fresh phase with money and your values is likely now via a New Moon eclipse. Romance and creativity get fresh, too, under Pluto's deep-cleaning influence. With Mercury and fiery Mars in your communication zone you're loud and proud, though Venus in your sign adds charm to help you get your way. A Full Moon eclipse ranks spontaneity above clinging on to outworn beliefs.
STYLE ICON: Florence Welch

ASTROLOGER: STELLA NOVA

Halo effect

Chanel's latest way to recast its classic? A collision of graphic 1960s geometry and the romance of the house's forever floral, the camellia. Dipped in sequins, it casts its own glow.

CHANEL bag, $12,450,
from the Chanel boutiques.

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